

**THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN PROVIDING
MATERIALS FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS TO THE USERS
IN TELANGANA****Naresh Gandhasiri**

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These abstract highlights the pivotal role played by university libraries in catering to the needs of users preparing for competitive examinations in the state of Telangana, India. With the increasing demand for various competitive exams, university libraries have emerged as essential hubs for providing relevant study materials, resources, and support to students and individuals aspiring to excel in these exams. This study delves into the strategies, resources, and services offered by university libraries in Telangana to facilitate effective preparation for competitive examinations. Through a comprehensive review of literature, analysis of library services, and user surveys, the study aims to shed light on the significance of these libraries in shaping the academic and professional futures of users. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of the multifaceted role of university libraries in supporting education and career aspirations, particularly in the context of competitive exams in Telangana.

Keywords: *Competitive exams, University libraries of Telangana, competitive examinations, career magazines, Information sources.*

Introduction

Competitive exams are standardized tests used to evaluate a person's knowledge and skills in a particular subject or field, and to determine their eligibility for various jobs or educational programs. The exams can cover a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, science, language, history, and many others. They are typically designed to be challenging, and the scores obtained on these exams are used to rank the individuals who take them and to determine their eligibility for certain opportunities. Libraries can play an important role in helping individuals prepare for competitive exams by providing access to materials and resources that can help them succeed.

University libraries play a vital role in providing materials for competitive examinations by offering a variety of resources, including books, journals, online databases, and study guides, to help students prepare for exams. The libraries often have specialized collections and reference materials specific to the subjects covered in competitive exams. They also provide access to online study resources and practice tests, as well as offer study and group study spaces to support students in their exam preparation. Additionally, librarians can assist students in finding and using the most relevant materials for their exam. Overall, university libraries serve as an important resource for students preparing for competitive exams by providing access to a wealth of information and support.



Awareness and usage of competitive examination resources among students can vary depending on a number of factors, including the individual student's level of motivation, the availability of resources, and the level of support provided by their institution. Some students may be highly motivated and proactive in seeking out and utilizing resources to prepare for competitive exams, while others may be less engaged or unaware of the resources available to them.

- To increase awareness and usage of competitive examination resources among students, universities and libraries can take a number of steps, including:
- Providing clear and comprehensive information on the resources available, including how to access them and how they can be used to support exam preparation.
- Offering training and support to help students effectively use the resources, such as workshops, online tutorials, and one-on-one assistance.
- Encouraging students to take advantage of the resources by highlighting success stories of students who have used them to achieve their goals.
- Making the resources accessible and easy to use by providing them in a variety of formats, including online and in-person.

All India level most popular competitive exams:

- **Civil Services Exam (UPSC):** This exam is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and is used to select candidates for various civil service positions in the Indian government, such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and Indian Foreign Service (IFS).
- **Banking Exams (IBPS, SBI, RBI):** These exams are conducted by various banking institutions and are used to select candidates for various positions in the banking sector, such as Probationary Officer (PO), Clerk, and Specialist Officer (SO).
- **Railways Exam (RRB):** This exam is conducted by the Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) and is used to select candidates for various positions in the Indian railways, such as Junior Engineer, Ticket Collector, and others.
- **Engineering Services Exam (ESE):** This exam is conducted by the UPSC and is used to select candidates for various engineering positions in the Indian government.
- **Medical Entrance Exams (NEET, AIIMS MBBS):** These exams are used to select candidates for admission to medical colleges and to determine their eligibility for various medical programs.

Telangana State level competitive exams are a popular way for individuals to secure government jobs and advance their careers. Some of the competitive exams that are commonly taken in Telangana include:

- **Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) Exams:** This exam is conducted by the Telangana State Public Service Commission and is used to select candidates for various government positions, such as Group I, Group II, Group III, and Group IV services.
- **Telangana State Level Police Recruitment Board (TSLPRB) Exams:** This exam is conducted by the Telangana State Level Police Recruitment Board and is used to



select candidates for various police positions, such as Sub Inspector (SI), Constable, and others.

- **Telangana State Educational Common Entrance Test (TS EdCET):** This exam is conducted by the Telangana State Council of Higher Education and is used to select candidates for admission to B.Ed courses in Telangana.
- **Telangana State Engineering, Agriculture and Medical Common Entrance Test (TS EAMCET):** This exam is conducted by the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad and is used to determine eligibility for admission to engineering, agriculture, and medical colleges in Telangana.

Utilizing their expertise in knowledge organization and dissemination, librarians have the potential to make a lasting impact by motivating and aiding young individuals in pursuing their passions and aspirations. This role becomes particularly significant in developing nations like India, where college librarians can actively contribute to the career advancement of youth who seek guidance and support within the library premises, aiding them in their studies and preparation for forthcoming career prospects. Within this context, university libraries are fulfilling a crucial role by furnishing resources and materials essential for tackling competitive examinations. These resources encompass a wide array, including books, practice assessments, and supplementary study aids.

Review of literature

Moly, T.M. (2007) In today's society, a young individual needs not only academic qualifications but also essential skills like effective communication, interpersonal abilities, and future-oriented thinking. Career planning equips students with the tools to make informed career choices, acquire necessary skills, and manage their chosen path. This study underscores libraries' pivotal role in delivering career information services to college students, exploring diverse methods for information dissemination. Emphasis is placed on the significance of offering internet services to aspiring career professionals. The paper identifies challenges faced by libraries in providing high-quality career information services and proposes solutions to enhance these services. **Prakashe, Veena & Lengure, Ramanik S. (2016)** The study titled "Arts Colleges Library and Competitive Exams: Information Needs and Library Services in Nagpur City" focuses on the information requirements of competitive exam aspirants within Nagpur City's Arts colleges. It evaluates the extent to which college libraries have effectively addressed these needs. The survey conducted at selected libraries reveals crucial insights that can guide future collection development efforts. Key student queries during competitive exam preparation were utilized as indicators to assess library collections and services. The authors conclude by offering suggestions to enhance librarians' ability to better serve these users. **Thangaiah, Raja & Kennedy, Ravi Kumar (2017)** In the recent years, public libraries are dissemination of resources to the students, Job seekers and the public. Paper discusses the awareness and usage of resources among students and job seekers in public libraries and also paper finds out the 61.1 percent of the respondents are using the competitive examination resources, 40 percent of the respondents have attended the number of coaching programmes, seminars and model tests related to competitive

examinations, 45.6 percent of the respondents have sufficient level of competitive examinations resources available in the library, 47.8 percent of the respondents are benefitted with the availability of internet with printout facility in the library while applying for the competitive examinations. **Farsana, A.K. & Devi B, Mini (2020)** conducted a study titled "Information Needs of LIS Career Seekers in Kerala: An Investigative Study." They explored the library's role among career seekers and their requirements for resources and services. The study targeted MISC students, part-time librarians, alumni of the LIS department, and full-time research scholars from University of Kerala and Mahatma Gandhi University. The survey utilized a structured questionnaire with both closed-ended and open-ended questions, distributed among 160 participants, yielding 154 responses. Notably, 99.35% of respondents expressed a need for internet services and electronic resources, while 86.36% sought documents containing application form formats. The study identified a significant demand (98.05%) for materials aiding LIS career seekers and providing information on training and education opportunities. **Iroaganachi, Mercy Ariomerebi (2022)** in his paper "Competitive Intelligence and Improving Patronage of the Twenty First Century Academic Libraries in Nigeria" discussed the employment of competitive intelligence for improving patronage of the 21st century academic libraries. It explored literature on; the concept of competitive intelligence, characteristics of the twenty first century academic library, attributes of competitive advantage in academic libraries and competitive intelligence activities in Nigerian academic libraries. It was discovered that funds and the necessary skill-sets were required for an academic library to develop to the point of having a competitive edge over other libraries. Also literature revealed that only few libraries especially private university libraries were already treading the path of gaining the competitive advantage for attracting increased patronage. The paper concluded that having competitive advantage is a function of better application of knowledge gained through competitive intelligence as a major factor for staying relevant and be able to attract the 21st century academic sophisticated library clientele. Also adequate provision of funds for innovation and upscale facilities and services is key to attracting patrons.

Objectives of the study

1. To know the availability of competitive examination materials in selected University Libraries in Telangana;
2. To find out innovative service /best practices adopted by the libraries in providing career guidance services.
3. To find out the level of usage of the competitive examination resources in selected University Libraries in Telangana;
4. To find out the level of satisfaction about competitive examinations resources in selected University Libraries in Telangana;
5. To find out the problems faced by respondents in using competitive examination resources.

Scope and limitation of the study

At present, Telangana State hosts fourteen State Universities and three Central Universities. For this research, specific State University Libraries have been chosen as data collection points due to their conventional nature, well-established status, and extensive collection of competitive materials. The study is confined to collecting usage data solely from students (both PG students and Research Scholars) and Librarians. It encompasses gathering general information about respondents, library resources (competitive materials), and user services. The study is conducted across the following Telangana universities. The following universities of Telangana are considered for the conduct of the study.

1. Osmania University (OU)
2. Kakatiya University (KU)
3. Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University (PSTU)
4. Satavahana University (SU)
5. Palamuru University (PU)
6. Telangana University (TU)
7. Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU)

Methodology

The study will utilize a survey approach encompassing all seven university libraries in Telangana to gather data. A semi-structured questionnaire will be employed for data collection, supplemented by observation and interview techniques. The researcher will directly engage with librarians and users to conduct interviews and obtain necessary information. The researcher will personally observe conditions within the chosen Telangana university libraries to ensure validity. The collected data will undergo analysis and will be presented in a tabular format.

Data analysis and interpretation

Table-1 Availability of information sources on competitive examinations

Sources in forms	OU	KU	PSTU	SU	PU	TU	MGU
Books	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Career Guidance Bulletins	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
Newspaper clippings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Competitive journals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CD's	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
Internet Based information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Others	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Total (N=40)	7	6	6	5	4	5	6
Percentage	17.95	15.38	15.38	12.82	10.26	12.82	15.38

It is evident from the table-1 that the OU has most of the 7(17.95%) sources on competitive examinations, KU, PSTU and MGU has 6(15.38%), SU and TU has 5(12.82%) of the sources and finally PU has 4(10.26%) of the sources on competitive examinations.

Table-2 Availability of career magazines (periodicals)

Major Career Periodicals	OU	KU	PSTU	SU	PU	TU	MGU
Career 360	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
Chronicle	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
Civil Service Analyst	✓	-	✓		✓	-	-
Civil Service Chronicle	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Civil Service times	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓
Competition Affairs	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Competition Master	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Competition Science Vision	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Competition Success Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CSR General Knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Current Science	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Down to Earth	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓
E-Magazine	✓		✓	-	-	-	-
Employment News	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exambazaar Monthly Current Affiars	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
Frontling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
India Today	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Investion Intelligence	-	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-
Kurukshetra	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
Make My Exam	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Pratiyogita Darpan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Readers Digest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science Reporter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Economic Times	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yogana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total (N=130)	22	19	15	19	19	16	20
Percentage	16.92	14.62	11.54	14.62	14.62	12.31	15.38

Major Career Periodicals	OU	KU	PSTU	SU	PU	TU	MGU
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Table-2 illustrates the availability of career magazines (periodicals) in select university libraries. OU has the majority of the 22(16.92%) sources followed by MGU has the 20(15.38%) of the sources, KU, SU and PU has the 19(14.62%) of the sources, TU has 16(12.31%) and PSTU has 15(11.54%) of the career magazines(periodicals).

Table-3 Innovative service /best practices adopted by the university libraries of Telangana

Innovative services	Adopted	Partially adopted	Not adopted
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Career Fairs	6(85.71%)	1(14.29%)	0
Career Workshops	5(71.43%)	2(28.57%)	0
Job Search Assistance	3(42.86%)	3(42.86%)	1(14.29%)
Mentorship Programs	3(42.86%)	2(28.57%)	2(28.57%)
Mock interviews	2(28.57%)	4(57.14%)	1(14.29%)
Online Career Resources	4(57.14%)	3(42.86%)	0
Personnel assistance for resume writing	1(14.29%)	4(57.14%)	2(28.57%)
Skill Development Workshop	2(28.57%)	3(42.86%)	2(28.57%)

It is clear from the Table-3 that majority 6(85.71%) of the University libraries adopted career fairs and 1(14.29%) are partially adopted, 5(71.43%) are adopted career workshops 2(28.57%) partially adopted, 3(42.86%) are adopted job search assistance and 1(14.29%) are not adopted, 3(42.86%) are adopted mentorship programs, 2(28.57%) partially adopted and 2(28.57%) are not adopted, 2(28.57%) adopted mock interviews, 4(57.14%) are partially adopted and 1(14.29%) not adopted, 4(57.14%) are adopted online career resources and 3(42.86%) are partially adopted, 1(14.29%) adopted personnel assistance for resume writing, 4(57.14%) partially and 2(28.57%) are not adopted and 2(28.57%) are adopted skill development workshops, 3(42.86%) are partially and 2(28.57%) are not adopted.

Table-4 Gender-wise category of the respondents

User category	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Research Scholars	230(30.07%)	126(16.47%)	356	46.54
PG students	287(37.52%)	122(15.95%)	409	53.46
Total	517(67.58%)	248(32.42%)	765	100

Table-4 shows the gender-wise category of the respondents, majority of the 409(53.46%) are PG students among this 287(37.52%) are male respondents and 122(15.95%) are females, 356(46.54%) of the respondents are research scholars, among this 230(30.07%) are male and 126(16.47%) are female respondents.

Table-5 How often do you access competitive examination materials

Frequency of visit	Research Scholars	P.G. Student	Total	Percentage
Daily	125	184	309	40.39
Once in two days	103	126	229	29.93
Once a week	60	49	109	14.25
Once in two weeks	34	17	51	6.67
Monthly	18	20	38	4.97
Occasionally	16	13	29	3.79
Total	356	409	765	100

Table-5 presents that the majority of the 309(40.39%) respondent's access daily, followed by 229(29.93%) access once in two days, 109(14.25%) access once a week, 51(6.67%) access once in two weeks, 38(4.97%) access monthly and 29(3.79%) of the respondents access occasionally.

Table-6 How much of time do you spent for competitive examinations

Time spent	Research Scholar	P.G. Student	Total	Parentage
Less than a hour	73	64	137	17.91
1 hour to 2 hours	146	202	348	45.49
2 hours to 5 hours	112	125	237	30.98
More than 5 hours	25	18	43	5.62
Total	356	409	765	100

It is evident from the table-6 that the most of 348(45.49%) respondents spent time for reading competitive examinations 1 to 2 hours, 237(30.98%) are spent 2 to 5 hours, 137(17.91%) are spent less than a hour, and 43(5.62%) of the respondents spent more than 5 hours for reading a competitive examinations.

Table-7 How far you are satisfied with competitive examination materials

Level of satisfaction	Research Scholar	P.G. Student	Total	Percentage
Large extent	160	182	342	44.71
Some extent	128	197	325	42.48
Least extent	68	30	98	12.81
Total	356	409	765	100

Table-7 presents that the majority of the 342(44.71%) respondents satisfied with large extent, 325(42.48%) are satisfied with some extent and 98(12.81%) of the respondents satisfied with least extent.

Table-8 Problems faced by respondents in using competitive examination resources

Problems	Most frequently	Frequently	Not at all
Outdated materials	582(76.08%)	145(18.95%)	36(4.71%)
Lack of knowledge & expertise	69(9.02%)	110(14.38%)	586(76.60%)
Lack of knowledge in internet searching	91(11.90%)	64(8.37%)	610(79.74%)
Lack of support from the library staff	41(5.36%)	32(4.18%)	692(90.46%)
Lack of time	129(16.86%)	268(35.03%)	368(48.10%)
Lack of training	144(18.82%)	265(34.64%)	356(46.54%)
Less computers to work	258(33.73%)	261(34.12%)	246(32.16%)
Resources are not adequate	304(39.74%)	296(38.69%)	165(21.57%)
Lack of Guidance	290(37.91%)	271(35.42%)	204(26.67%)
Lack of finance	255(33.33%)	270(35.29%)	240(31.37%)

It is evident from the table-8 that the majority of the 582(76.08%) respondents most frequently faced problem is there are outdated materials in the library, followed by 586(76.60%) of them said Lack of knowledge & expertise not at all problem, 610(79.74%) said Lack of knowledge in internet searching not at all a problem, 692(90.46%) said there

is problem of support of library staff, 261(34.12%) of them said less computers to work is frequent problem, 304(39.74%) said resources are not adequate is frequent problem 290(37.91%) said lack of guidance is frequent problem and 270(35.29%) of the respondents said lack of finance is frequent problem faced by the users.

Major findings of the study

- It is found that the most of the 7(17.95%) sources on competitive examinations, KU, PSTU and MGU has 6(15.38%), SU and TU has 5(12.82%) of the sources and finally PU has 4(10.26%) of the sources on competitive examinations.
- OU has the majority of the 22(16.92%) sources followed by MGU has the 20(15.38%) of the sources, KU, SU and PU has the 19(14.62%) of the sources, TU has 16(12.31%) and PSTU has 15(11.54%) of the career magazines(periodicals).
- Majority of the 409(53.46%) are PG students among this 287(37.52%) are male respondents and 122(15.95%) are females, 356(46.54%) of the respondents are research scholars, among this 230(30.07%) are male and 126(16.47%) are female respondents.
- It is found that the majority of the 309(40.39%) respondent's access daily, followed by 229(29.93%) access once in two days, 109(14.25%) access once a week, 51(6.67%) access once in two weeks, 38(4.97%) access monthly and 29(3.79%) of the respondents access occasionally.
- Most of 348(45.49%) respondents spent time for reading competitive examinations 1 to 2 hours, 237(30.98%) are spent 2 to 5 hours.
- majority of the 582(76.08%) respondents most frequently faced problem is there are outdated materials in the library, followed by 586(76.60%) of them said Lack of knowledge & expertise not at all problem, 610(79.74%) said Lack of knowledge in internet searching not at all a problem, 692(90.46%) said there is problem of support of library staff, 261(34.12%) of them said less computers to work is frequent problem, 304(39.74%) said resources are not adequate is frequent problem 290(37.91%) said lack of guidance is frequent problem and 270(35.29%) of the respondents said lack of finance is frequent problem faced by the users.

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