



“Challenges Faced by Urdu Medium Students in Preparing and Qualifying Teacher Eligibility Exams”

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1. Abstract

The current research explores how Urdu medium students are struggling to pass Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) like the Central Teacher Eligibility Test and State-specific TETs in the larger context of linguistic diversity and inclusive education in India. Although Urdu is one of the scheduled languages in the Constitution of India, competition exams still do not favor it, thus posing a structural disadvantage to Urdu medium candidates. The research design used is a qualitative approach with descriptive research design to examine the linguistic, academic, and resource-related barriers faced by candidates. The sample was purposely selected and semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample of students preparing to take TET examinations in Urdu medium and analysed through thematic analysis. The results indicate that language issues are one of the significant obstacles since English and Hindi as the languages of examination limit understanding and communication. Respondents indicated that they had a major problem with technical vocabulary, question interpretation, and expression of answers. Moreover, among the academic difficulties, there were the poor exposure to pedagogical ideas, and the lack of conceptual clarity. The paper also discusses lack of access to good preparatory machinery, such as Urdu-medium study resources, coaching facilities and online learning tools, as a key determinant of

performance. Along with a decrease in confidence and anxiety about being examined, these difficulties are complicated by psychological aspects. The research comes to the conclusion that challenges encountered by Urdu medium students are institutional and not personal, demonstrating the issue of linguistic inequity in the education system. It highlights the importance of comprehensive policy changes such as the introduction of Urdu as a medium of examination, creation of standardized resources and broadening of institutional and digital support systems. These issues need to be tackled so that the teaching profession could be accessible to everyone equally and that a more inclusive and representative educational system in India could be established.

Keywords: Urdu Medium Students; Teacher Eligibility Test (TET); Central Teacher Eligibility Test; Language Barriers;



2. Introduction

In India, Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) are an important regulatory tool that helps to guarantee some minimum professional competence in the prospective teachers and have now become a qualitative condition in getting hired in the elementary level. These examinations were established on the recommendations of the National Council of Teacher Education and are used to evaluate the competence of the candidates in child development, pedagogy and subject knowledge to ensure that the quality of school education is maintained. At the national level, the Central Teacher Eligibility Test administered by the Central Board of Secondary Education is a standardized benchmark of recruitment in central government schools, and various state-level examinations, including the Uttar Pradesh Teacher Eligibility Test, Maharashtra Teacher Eligibility Test, West Bengal Teacher Eligibility Test, Rajasthan Eligibility Examination All these tests are meant to provide equal standards of teacher quality across a wide range of educational settings, but their linguistic focus throws serious questions about accessibility to non-dominant language speakers, especially Urdu medium students. Urdu, which is one of the 22 scheduled languages in the constitution of India, has profound historical, cultural, and linguistic origins in the Indian subcontinent. Its history can be followed back to the Mughal era, when it became a syncretic language influenced by the Persian, Arabic, and native speaking linguistic traditions and gradually it has evolved as a fruitful source of literary, cultural and daily communication. Urdu is still used as a popular native language in a number of states in the modern India, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Jammu and Kashmir, which testifies to its ongoing social context and cultural value. Notably, Urdu does not exist on the fringes of informality, but actively exists in the worlds of formal education, with many schools teaching Urdu as a language of instruction both at primary and secondary levels, with many universities teaching it as both a content and a language of academic interaction in the humanities and social sciences. This continuity of institutional representation shows that there are many learners who receive their basic education in Urdu and hope to use the language in their higher and professional fields, such as the teaching field. The issue is however acutely differentiated when these learners move onto competitive examination systems especially TETs wherein the medium of assessment fails to sufficiently encompass the multilingual reality of India. In spite of being designed in a theoretically inclusive way, TET tests are actually given in either English or Hindi, with some states offering other regional languages; in particular, Urdu is not offered as a fully comprehensive medium of examination, but is usually offered as an optional subject, whether as Language I or Language II. It involves the fact that, though the candidates can take the paper in a particular language, Urdu, the main part of the examination, including child development and pedagogy, environmental studies, and mathematics, are usually not offered in Urdu as a complete language and thus, candidates taking examination in the Urdu medium are forced to study complex academic information in the second language. The linguistic limitation has great implications in understanding, cognitive functioning as well as academic achievements since language is at the center stage of generating conceptual knowledge and abilities to express knowledge in a sound manner. It is especially acute on the parts of the pedagogical course that presuppose the interpretation of abstract theories, the use of educational principles, the knowledge of technical terms, which are more difficult to find their way in a non-native language. Moreover, the absence of standardized and quality preparation materials in Urdu worsens these challenges because applicants frequently rely on translated ones, which might not be conceptually accurate, and the terms are confused, and coaching schools and online education platforms are mostly in English or Hindi so that applicants in the Urdu medium cannot find a structured guide. Besides academic obstacles, these students also face numerous psychological and socio-cultural barriers, such as the lack of self-confidence, increased anxiety, and a feeling of being marginalized in a competitive world favoring dominant languages. These experiences do not only impact the performance in exams but also on future career prospects especially in the teaching professions where the TET qualification is a requirement. Policymaking wise, the scenario is indicative of a lack of connection between the constitutional acknowledgment of linguistic diversity and its application in practice in assessment systems; as much as the Constitution of India has confirmed the status of Urdu as a scheduled language and educational system stipulates inclusivity and equity, the fact that Urdu is not a full medium to be tested during TET examinations puts pressure on a more extensive and linguistically responsive policy response. This gap is critical to ensuring that Urdu medium candidates are not discriminated against systematically and are able to



enjoy a level playing field in the teaching fraternity and thus lead to a more representative and inclusive educational system.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the linguistic challenges experienced by Urdu medium students while preparing for and attempting Teacher Eligibility Tests.
2. To analyze the academic and pedagogical difficulties encountered by Urdu medium candidates.
3. To explore the accessibility and availability of preparatory for Urdu medium aspirants.

4. Methodology

Research Design

The current study will use descriptive research design within the qualitative framework to describe and analyze the difficulties of Urdu medium students in passing Teacher Eligibility Tests, such as the Central Teacher Eligibility Test and other State TETs in a systematic way.

Population of the Study

The sample will include Urdu medium students who have taken or are about to take Teacher Eligibility Tests on the central and state levels.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 15 Urdu medium aspirants. The following criteria were used to select the participants:

- Completion of D.Ed and B.Ed through Urdu medium
- Experience in preparing TET exams.

Tools for Data Collection

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule to gather more detailed data on linguistic problems, academic problems, and the presence of preparation resources.

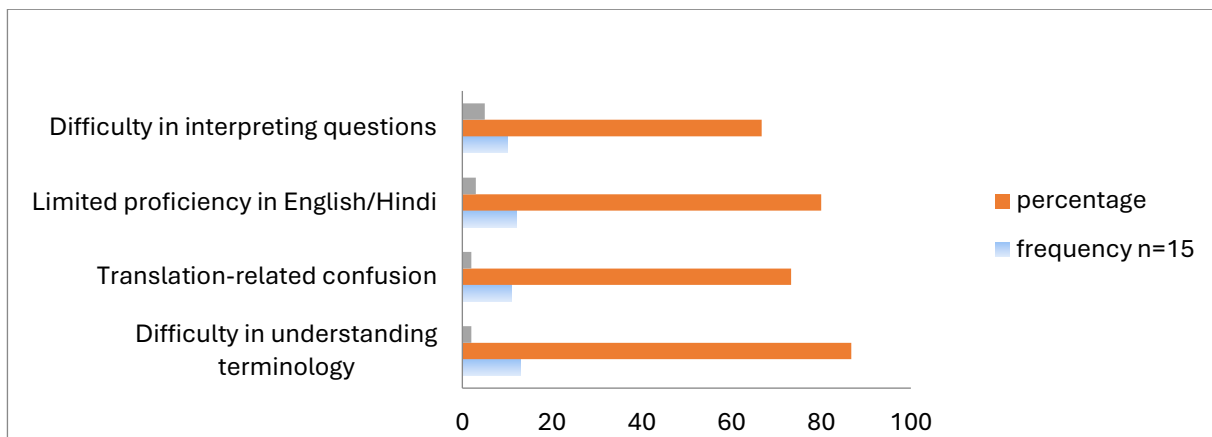
Data Analysis Technique

The data obtained were analysed through thematic analysis. .

5. Theme- Wise Data Analysis

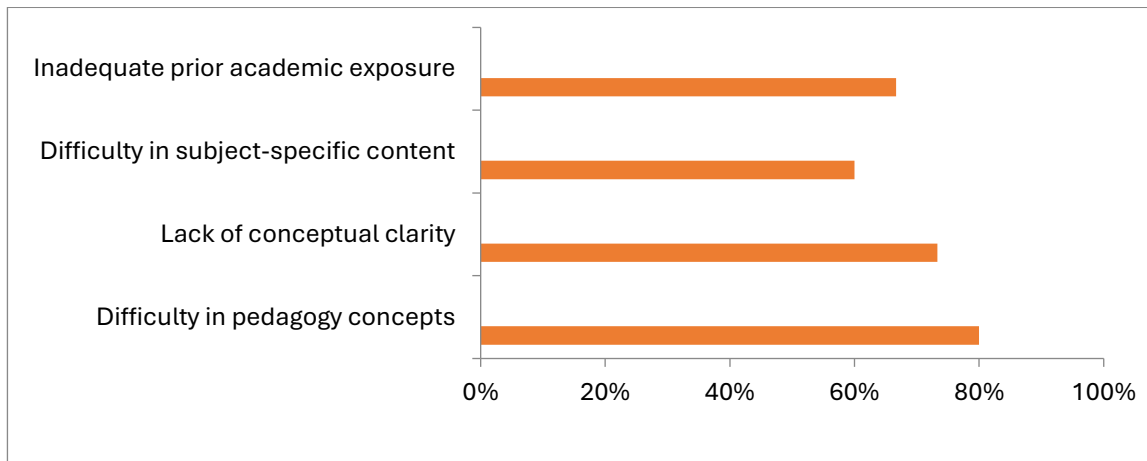
1. Linguistic Challenges

Most participants indicated that they had a major problem in comprehending the language of the exam. Some of the common challenges identified in the analysis included lack of English and Hindi expertise, inability to understand complicated terminologies, and misunderstanding caused by inconsistency in the translation of terms. The respondents reported that although Urdu was offered as an optional language paper, the fundamental parts of the examination were not easily understandable because of unfamiliar words and technical terms.

**Table 1: Linguistic Challenges Faced by Participants**

2. Academic and Pedagogical Difficulties

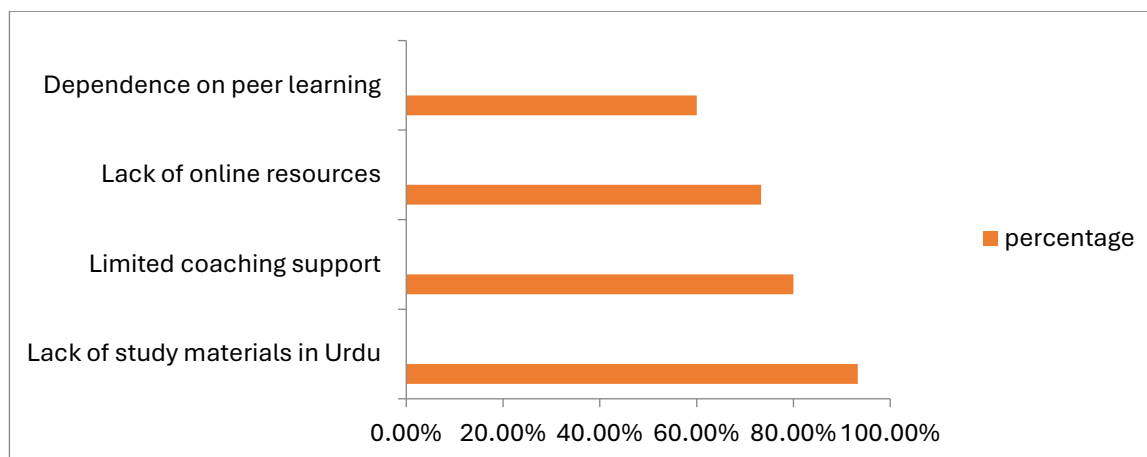
Participants complained of difficulties in comprehending fundamental ideas about child development, pedagogy, and subject-related material. Most of them complained that their previous educational experiences had not prepared them adequately to the conceptual requirements of TET examinations. Such abstract notions like constructivism, assessment strategies and inclusive education were especially hard to understand.

Table 2: Academic and Pedagogical Difficulties

N=15

3. Accessibility of Preparatory Resources

The data showed that there was a strong deficiency in available and quality preparatory materials in Urdu. The participants noted the lack of standard textbooks, a lack of coaching in the Urdu medium, and insufficient digital learning resources. A majority of them depended on self-translation or peer support to study the examination.

**Table 3: Accessibility of Preparatory Resources**

N=15

Interpretation of Data

According to the thematic analysis, it is clear that linguistic barriers represent the most serious challenge, and the next ones are the problems of resource availability and academic preparedness. The large number of respondents who expressed that they had problems with deciphering terminology is indicative that the Urdu medium students are not at a disadvantage because they are not capable, but because there are structural and linguistic obstacles in place in the examination system.

6. Discussion

The study reveals that linguistic barriers are a major hindrance to the Urdu medium candidates. Respondents undertook that they found it very challenging to understand the contents of examinations because English and Hindi were mostly used as the main assessment languages. The result is in line with the available literature regarding multilingual education, which stresses the fact that language is a key factor in determining cognitive processing and conceptual knowledge. Lack of Urdu as a complete medium in TET exams limits the capacity of the candidates to interact with advanced pedagogical terms, hence the outcome. Though Urdu is taught as an optional subject in language, this little coverage is not the solution to the general problem of language accessibility in the examinable elements. This is indicative of the lack of congruence between the constitutional status of Urdu as per the Constitution of India and its inability to be included in competitive examination systems.

Besides language limitations, the research also indicates that academic and pedagogical challenges are also a point of concern. The participants were not very familiar with the major concepts in child development and pedagogy, including constructivist methods, assessment methods, and inclusive education methods. These results are an indication that the academic background of the Urdu medium students might not be appropriate to equip them to the conceptual level of TET examinations. This is further worsened by the pre-eminence of English-language pedagogical literature limiting access to underlying knowledge. These findings are also in line with the theoretical viewpoints which highlights the significance of language in the mediation of learning, which means that conceptual knowledge is tightly connected to the vehicle by which knowledge is learned.

Inaccessibility of preparatory resources is also the challenge that has been found to be the most noticeable in the analysis of the study. The subjects noted that there is a shortage of standardized study content in Urdu, few coaching institutes that provide instruction in Urdu, and poor digital content. This disparity in resources leaves Urdu medium applicants at a big disadvantage to their English and Hindi medium applicants who can enjoy the benefits of a large ecosystem of preparatory programs. The use of translated material, which is not always



conceptually clear and consistent, also compromises effective preparation. This observation highlights the role of availability of resources as a key factor to success in competitive tests.

The findings pose important questions related to inclusivity of the teacher recruitment processes in the context of policy and practice. Although TET exams are supposed to be quality and standardized, their present structure can potentially end up discriminating candidates with linguistic diversity. This absence of the use of Urdu as a full-fledged medium of examination goes against the ideals of equity and inclusivity that are the main focus of the national education policies. Systemic changes, such as the creation of standardized Urdu-based question papers, high quality preparatory material and available digital resources are needed.

7. Educational Implications

- There is need to have Urdu as full examination medium in Teacher Eligibility Tests which also includes Central Teacher Eligibility Test. Currently, Urdu is provided as an optional language paper which is not sufficient to support the Urdu medium candidate in the core subjects like child development and pedagogy. Offering Urdu as a complete language would grant the candidates an opportunity to appreciate the questions properly, grasp concepts well, and articulate their knowledge without word barriers, thus making the assessment process fair and equitable.
- Preparation of quality and standardized study materials in Urdu: This is necessary to fill the current academic gap. Such materials must consist of textbooks, reference books, sample question papers and solved examples according to the TET syllabus. Clarifying concepts and consistency in terms in the Urdu language will go a long way in improving the readiness of applicants and minimize the use of untrue or low-quality resources.
- When the multilingual question papers are being used, it is important to make sure that the translation is correct, contextually suitable and devoid of ambiguity. Misinterpretation of questions usually occurs due to poor translation, which adversely impacts on performance. To enhance the reliability and validity of examination content, creating expert translation committees and standardized glossaries of pedagogical terms in Urdu can be used.
- As digital education becomes more important, access to online materials in Urdu needs to be developed. They can be video lectures, interactive modules, mock tests, and mobile apps that are customizable to TET preparation. Increasing the digital content in Urdu will assist in breaking the geographical and economic barrier so that more people can gain access to quality learning materials.
- Education programmes on teacher training must also include training in multilingual and inclusive pedagogy. Future educators should be provided with the tools to deal with the linguistic differences in the classroom. This will not only ensure that Urdu medium candidates are benefited but also help in the establishment of inclusivity in learning by the students who have diverse language backgrounds.
- Institutions are encouraged to implement bridge courses and remedial programmes to help the Urdu medium students to acquire competence in pedagogical principles and skills related to examinations. Students can also gain better access to language requirements in TET examinations through language support classes that touch on academic terms in English, as well as, in Hindi.
- Urdu medium candidates tend to have low confidence and anxiety about exams because of the perceived linguistic disadvantages. Self-efficacy and motivation can be developed through providing counseling services, mentoring programmes and peer-learning opportunities. A stimulating academic space is also necessary to enhance performance and general well-being.
- The linguistic, academic and resource barriers should also be addressed to give the Urdu medium students equal chances of being eligible to hold teaching jobs. Through establishing a comprehensive examination system, the education sector will be able to promote diversity in the teaching workforce, which is crucial in meeting the needs of the multilingual classrooms and enhancing equal education.



8. Conclusion

The current research investigated the problems of Urdu medium students in passing Teacher Eligibility Tests, such as Central Teacher Eligibility Test and other State TETs with the emphasis on linguistic barrier, academic issues, and the availability of preparatory materials. These results demonstrate that all these issues are closely related and based on the systemic injustices of the educational and examination system. The language barrier has become a major issue as English and Hindi as assessment mediums mean that Urdu medium candidates can not effectively understand and respond to the content of their examinations. Despite the status of Urdu as an optional language subject in TET examinations, its limited presence as an optional language under the Constitution of India suggests a discrepancy between policy and practice. This linguistic drawback impacts considerably on the conceptual knowledge especially in the fields of child development, pedagogy, where technical terms and abstract ideas are concerned. Also, the research revealed significant academic and pedagogical barriers as a lot of the students of Urdu medium do not receive sufficient exposure to standardized concepts of teaching and examination-based preparation. The challenges are also aggravated by the scarcity of quality study resources, coaching, and online materials in Urdu, which forces the candidates to use poor translations and self-studying methods. Lack of a conducive preparatory ecosystem not only makes academic performance a burden but also adds up to psychological issues, including lack of confidence and anxiety about exams. The paper highlights that these obstacles are institutional as opposed to personal, which is a wider problem of linguistic inequality and marginalization in competitive examination regimes. Policy-wise, the results emphasize the necessity to make radical changes to make the teacher certification process more inclusive and equitable. The introduction of Urdu as a full-fledged medium of examination, preparation of standard preparatory materials, institutional and digital support systems are necessary measures to overcome these challenges. In addition, the regulatory agencies like the National Council for Teacher Education are required to be proactive in ensuring that the practice of examinations is in line with the principle of linguistic diversity and educational equity. To sum up, the issue of Urdu medium students is very important in order to guarantee equal access to the teaching profession as well as to provide a more inclusive and representative education system that would mirror the multilingual India.

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