

## Developing Teachers as Change Agents: A Qualitative Study of Master of Education Graduates in Pakistan

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**Abstract :** The 'Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan' (STEP) is an innovative programme jointly funded by the Government of Canada and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada and implemented by the Aga Khan University - Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) in partnership with the local governments, education departments and communities in the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh and Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan. One of the key components of the programme is the professional development of teachers, headteachers and teacher educators through a variety of teacher education programmes including a two-year Masters of Education (MEd) Programme offered by AKU-IED. A number of teachers, headteachers and teacher educators from these provinces have been developed through the MEd Programme. This paper discusses a qualitative research study conducted to explore the nature, relevance, rigor and richness of the experiences of the MEd graduates, and how these experiences have fostered their own professional development and their ability to bring about positive changes in their schools. The findings of the study provide useful insights into the graduates' self-actualization, the transformation of their professional beliefs and practices, the difference they have made in their schools, and the challenges they face. The study also provides recommendations for policy and practice related to teacher education programmes.

**Keywords :** STEP, teacher education, Pakistan, Canada, Aga Khan foundation

**Conference Title :** ICE 2016 : International Conference on Education

**Conference Location :** Barcelona, Spain

**Conference Dates :** February 15-16, 2016