

## SCOPING REVIEW

## Faculty Perceptions on FAIMER Program: A Scoping Review


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## Article Information

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 <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3436-9917> <https://doi.org/10.4038/sljms1.v2i2.79>

Received 20 April 2026

Accepted 25 May 2026

## Declaration of conflicts of interest:

There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

**Funding:** No external funding was received to prepare the manuscript.

## Abstract

**Background:** Faculty development programs (FDPs) in health professions education aim to enhance educational leadership, teaching competence, and administrative capacity. The FAIMER model integrates project-based learning with education and leadership enhancement to advance professional networks and institutional change. A collective review of faculty perceptions is not readily available for understanding.

**Methods:** The PRISMA framework was used to conduct this scoping review. The studies referred to were conducted between 2004 and 2025. Of these, 11 studies were included. Mixed-method evaluations, longitudinal studies, case studies, and qualitative inquiries were the data sources.

**Results:** There were increases in self-efficacy, leadership skills, and professional competency. The outcomes at the institutional level were curriculum reforms, improvements in teaching quality, and increased collaboration. Globally, it emphasized expanding networking among fellows, fostering cross-cultural leadership, and sustaining professional communities. The cultural influences were found to both challenge and promote learning, prompting adaptive strategies.

**Conclusion:** FAIMER programs are effective in building individual capacity, triggering institutional change, and maintaining global networks among professionals. The triad of leadership, project management, and response to cultural differences strengthens the success of this program. Future focus must be on outcomes at the institutional level and on refining evaluation frameworks to strengthen evidence of global educational impact.

**Keywords:** FDP, FAIMER, health professions education, faculty perception

## Introduction

Faculty development programs (FDPs), when conducted effectively, help medical teachers improve their teaching competence, leadership skills, and administrative capacity. Accordingly, their contribution strengthens medical education and improves health outcomes.<sup>1</sup> The Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) launched the

Cite this article as: Raviraj KG, et al. Faculty Perceptions on FAIMER Program: A Scoping Review. SLJMS 2025; 2(2): 77-82



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international faculty programs in 2001. The aim was to build sustainable networks of international educators in order to promote institutional change through project-based learning.<sup>2</sup>

FAIMER programs integrate education, leadership training, and a project-based approach. As determined in one of the early studies<sup>1</sup>, fellows gained knowledge, skills, and confidence while there was a balance with professional networking. Later studies reported that the faculty perceived an increase in their competence and leadership skills<sup>2,3</sup> and that the successful completion of the projects led to curricular reforms and policy integration at the institutional level.<sup>4</sup>

FAIMER has contributed at both the individual and institutional levels, while enhancing global collaboration among faculty through its FDPs. Partnerships across cultural contexts emphasized mutual support, cultural competence, and trust-building.<sup>5,8</sup> A qualitative analysis<sup>7</sup> highlighted project-based learning, leadership skills, and public awareness as success factors.

Certain frameworks like ‘theory of change’ demonstrated the multiplied effects on health professions education and community health outcomes.<sup>9</sup> The cultural differences were seen as both challenges and opportunities, in turn encouraging adaptive strategies.<sup>10</sup> Lately, a success case analysis report stated positive perceptions of career advancement, professional development, and global networking among the faculty who participated in the FDPs.<sup>11</sup>

This scoping review was conducted to understand and present the educational and institutional impact of the FAIMER FDPs from the faculty’s point of view. This review synthesizes evidence from 11 studies conducted between 2004 and 2025, highlighting the contributions of FAIMER programs to faculty development.

### Methods

This scoping review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA-ScR (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses – for Scoping Reviews) framework.

#### Eligibility criteria

- Published articles between 2004 and 2025
- Outcomes reported of the FAIMER programs (international/regional)
- Publications focused on faculty perceptions, institutional changes and/or global collaborations.
- All other review articles were excluded.

#### Search strategy

PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and manual references were checked. Book chapters were referred to as an additional source. Screening was done, and duplicates were removed. Titles and abstracts were independently screened by two reviewers. Eleven studies met the criteria by consensus. The process is depicted in Figure 1.

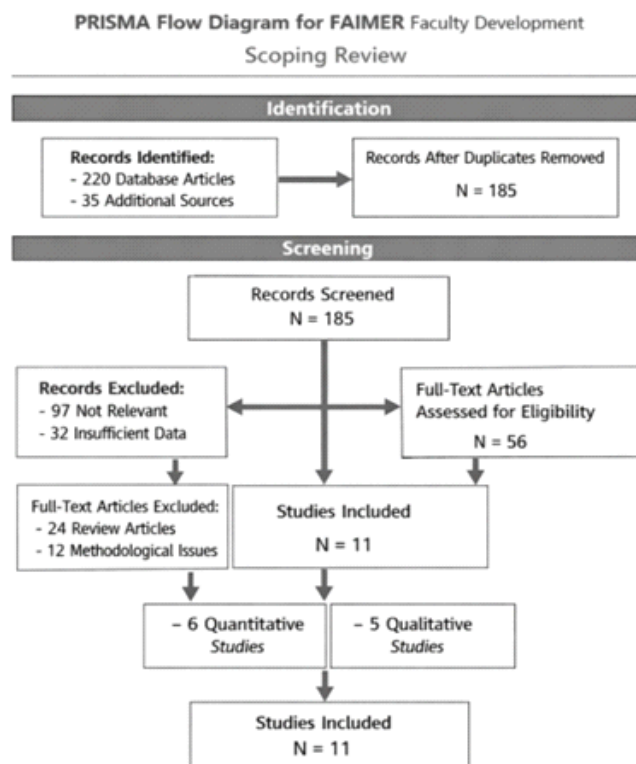


Figure 1. Search strategy and the selection process according to PRISMA 2020.

## Results

Eleven studies between 2004 and 2025 included mixed methods,<sup>1</sup> retrospective studies,<sup>2</sup> case studies,<sup>3</sup> project

analyses,<sup>4</sup> qualitative studies,<sup>6</sup> quasi-experimental longitudinal studies,<sup>7</sup> narratives,<sup>7</sup> and theory-driven evaluation.<sup>9,10,11</sup>

**Table 1. Various studies included for this scoping review with their focus area and key findings**

<i>Study</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Design</i>	<i>Focus Area</i>	<i>Key Findings</i>
Norcini J, Burdick W, Morahan P	2005	Mixed methods	Network creation	Fellows reported improved knowledge, skills, and attitudes; strengthened professional networks enabled innovative projects.
Burdick WP, Diserens D, Friedman SR, et al.	2010	Retrospective survey + interviews	Leadership & competence	Nearly 100% of fellows reported gains in leadership skills; increased perceptions of importance and competence in curriculum areas; nearly universal gain in leadership skills.
Burdick W, Amaral E, Campos H, Norcini J	2011	Case study	Education – health linkage	Fellows linked faculty development to institutional improvements in teaching quality and collaboration, with downstream community health impact.
Burdick WP, Friedman SR, Diserens D	2012	Project analysis (n=435)	Institutional change	56% of projects integrated policy; improved teaching into curricula/ quality, collaboration, and curriculum alignment with community needs.
Friedman S, Cilliers F, Tekian A, Norcini J	2013	Review chapter	International partnerships	Cultural competence, shared values, and mutual support identified as facilitators of successful partnerships.
Mennin S, Kalishman S, Eklund MA, Friedman S	2013	Qualitative project analysis	Project based learning	Success factors included leadership, collaboration, and societal awareness; challenges were limited time and resources.
Singh T, de Grave W, Ganjiwale J, Supe A, Burdick WP, van der Vleuten C	2013	Quasi experimental longitudinal	Self efficacy	Significant, sustained increase in teaching self efficacy among fellows compared to controls.
Burdick WP	2014	Narrative synthesis	Global collaboration	Authentic projects, cross cultural leadership, and trust building reduced dependency and promoted sustainability.

(Continued)

Study	Year	Design	Focus Area	Key Findings
Yuan S, Mukherjee S, Vyas R, Burdick W	2019	Theory of Change evaluation	Program impact	Demonstrated ripple effect on health professions education; identified intermediate outcomes for continuous improvement.
Hejri SM, Vyas R, Burdick WP, Steinert Y	2023	Qualitative cultural analysis	Cultural adaptation	Cultural differences acted as both bridges and barriers; program culture and context shaped learning adaptations.
Yuan S, Rahim A, Kannappan S, Dongre A, Jain A, Kar SS, Mukherjee S, Vyas R	2024	Success Case Method	Perceived success	Fellows reported career advancement (majority), professional development, and expanded networks as major outcomes.

## Discussion

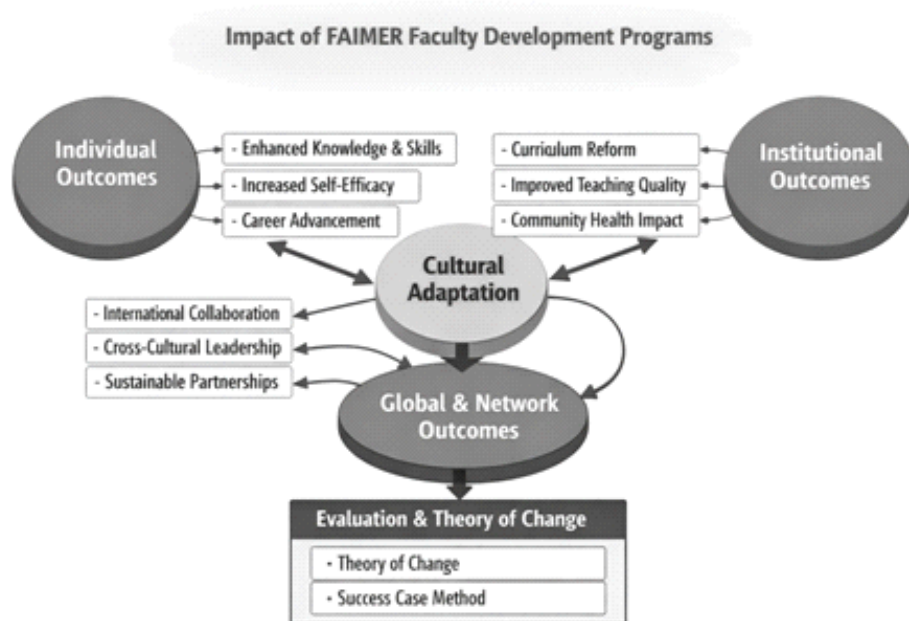


Figure 2. Concept map of the FAIMER FDPs outcomes.

This review employs a thematic synthesis, grouped into domains of individual, institutional, and global outcomes. Frameworks of evaluation like ‘theory of change’ and ‘success case analysis’ were demonstrated with methodological diversity

It consolidates the evidence from 11 studies. It was noted that there were consistent benefits across individual,

institutional, and global domains. It also revealed the contextual challenges and opportunities for change.

### Individual outcomes

Gains of knowledge, leadership skills, and teaching competencies were reported by the individuals.<sup>2</sup> The longitudinal studies confirmed the sustained improvements

in self-efficacy.<sup>7</sup> Success case analysis emphasized career advancement, recognition, and professional growth.<sup>11</sup>

### Institutional outcomes

These projects triggered curricular reforms and improved teaching quality. More than 50% of the projects were integrated into the institutional policy.<sup>4</sup> Faculty development was linked to socially accountable education and, in turn, community health improvements.<sup>3</sup> This highlights the FAIMER's role in promoting systemic change.

### Global outcomes

This model strengthened the international networks of educators. Fellows developed strong professional bonds, which enabled the dissemination of innovations across cultural and national boundaries.<sup>1</sup> trust building, cross-cultural leadership, and genuine projects were identified as critical for sustaining collaborations.<sup>8</sup>

### Cultural adaptation

The differences emerged as both challenges and sources of encouragement. The differences in professional backgrounds prompted adaptations in teaching and leadership approaches.<sup>10</sup> These dynamics acted as bridges towards awareness, reinforcing cultural competence in global faculty development.<sup>5</sup>

### Evaluation and theory of change

This framework linked the faculty development to broader changes in health professions education.<sup>9</sup> This supported the need for continuous data-driven evaluations to refine the preliminary outcomes and strengthen the final program efficacy.

In addition to the qualitative studies, several reported measurable outcomes.<sup>2,4,7</sup> However, the methodological diversity and predominance of qualitative designs do not allow the meta-analysis process.

### Limitations

- The included studies used different methodologies.
- Most of the results were fellows' perceptions – may be biased.
- Context variability – differences in culture and institutions may affect the generalizability.
- A large proportion of the included studies were authored by a small group of researchers closely associated with FAIMER. This reflects their role in the program development, which might reduce the diversity of perspectives and should be considered when interpreting the results. Hence, need more studies on this aspect.

## Conclusions

This review indicated that FAIMER FDPs effectively build individual capacity, accelerate necessary changes at the institutional level, and sustain networking among educators across the globe. The triad of FAIMER program – leadership training, project management and cultural responsiveness lifts the success rate. The strategies for cultural adaptation and success case narratives highlighted the program's relevance.

The quantitative findings obtained reinforce these perceptions: for example, 56% of projects were integrated into curricula, nearly all fellows reported gains in leadership skills, and a significant sustained increase in teaching was observed. These measurable outcomes match the qualitative evidence of career advancement, professional development, and strengthened international networks. Observing that the predominance of qualitative and mixed-methods designs limits the scope for statistical synthesis, and that most were authored by the FAIMER fellow researchers, may reduce the diversity of perspectives.

Overall, FAIMER programs appear to enrich leadership, project management, and cultural responsiveness, contributing to systemic educational change. Further research should prioritize standardized quantitative studies across diverse contexts, which would, in turn, strengthen the evidence base for more statistically significant conclusions.

### Authors' contributions

Concept and design: RKG

Literature review: RKG, SSS

Data collection: RKG

Compilation of manuscript: RKG

Reviewing and proofreading of the manuscript: RKG, SSS

### Acknowledgments

The existing studies on this FAIMER Fellow's perception.

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