

# Evaluating the Contribution of Faculty Development Programs to Institutional Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Study Using Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Model

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Article History	Abstract
<b>Original Research Article</b>	<p><i>This study examines the contribution of faculty development programs to institutional outcomes through an embedded mixed-methods design anchored in Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Model. Drawing on longitudinal data from fourteen faculty members over a four-year period (2022–2026), the study integrates quantitative indicators—faculty rank progression, performance evaluation ratings, and research productivity—with qualitative insights derived from semi-structured interviews. Findings indicate that faculty development initiatives are associated with improvements in teaching practices, professional engagement, and selected institutional outcomes. However, gains in research productivity remain uneven, suggesting the need for more targeted and sustained support mechanisms. The study extends the application of Kirkpatrick's framework in higher education by demonstrating how multi-level evaluation can inform institutional quality assurance and strategic decision-making.</i></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Faculty Development; Kirkpatrick Model; Mixed-Methods Evaluation; Higher Education; Teaching Effectiveness; Research Productivity; Quality Assurance.</p>
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## Introduction

Higher education institutions operate within increasingly complex environments that demand not only disciplinary expertise but also adaptive teaching, research productivity, leadership capability, and professional resilience among faculty. In this context, faculty development programs have become essential institutional mechanisms for strengthening instructional quality and advancing organizational performance (Robinos et al., 2019; Phuong & Duong, 2022; Foroughi et al., 2024; Shah & Jabeen, 2025). Existing scholarship indicates that well-structured professional development initiatives are associated with improvements in pedagogical competence, instructional innovation, and faculty engagement (Alsagheer et al., 2022; Cotta et al., 2024). However, evaluation practices within

institutions often remain limited to immediate feedback or satisfaction metrics, providing only a partial view of program effectiveness.

This study responds to this limitation by adopting Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Model (Kirkpatrick, 1959; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006), which enables a more comprehensive evaluation across Reaction, Learning, Behavior, and Results. Rather than isolating short-term outcomes, this framework allows for the examination of how faculty development initiatives contribute to sustained professional practice and institutional performance.

Accordingly, the study aims to assess:

1. Faculty perceptions and satisfaction (Reaction)

2. Competency development (Learning)
3. Application in professional practice (Behavior)
4. Institutional outcomes (Results)

By integrating these dimensions within a mixed-methods design, the study positions faculty development not as a discrete intervention, but as a strategic driver within institutional quality systems.

### Literature Review

Faculty development has been consistently identified as a critical determinant of teaching quality and institutional effectiveness. Contemporary studies demonstrate that structured programs enhance instructional design, facilitate the adoption of innovative pedagogies, and strengthen student engagement outcomes (Cotta et al., 2024). Beyond instructional gains, professional development initiatives contribute to faculty self-efficacy, reflective practice, and professional identity formation (Alsagheer et al., 2022; Ayub et al., 2025). These outcomes are particularly significant in higher education systems that prioritize continuous improvement and quality assurance. Kirkpatrick’s Four-Level Model remains one of the most influential frameworks for evaluating training effectiveness. Its strength lies in its layered structure, which captures immediate participant reactions while extending analysis to behavioral change and organizational outcomes (Bahl et al., 2024). Despite its widespread use, applications within higher education often emphasize the first two levels—Reaction and Learning—while giving limited attention to Behavior and Results.

Recent literature calls for more integrative approaches that link faculty development to institutional metrics, including performance evaluations, career progression, and research outputs (Foroughi et al., 2024). Such approaches are particularly relevant in contexts where faculty development is embedded within broader strategic and quality assurance frameworks. This study contributes to this emerging direction by applying all four levels of Kirkpatrick’s model within a single institutional case, thereby connecting individual learning experiences with measurable organizational outcomes.

### Methodology

This study employed an embedded mixed-methods design, wherein quantitative data constituted the primary strand and qualitative data provided explanatory depth. This approach enables the triangulation of measurable outcomes with faculty experiences, thereby strengthening the validity of the evaluation.

The study involved fourteen faculty members from the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) cluster of a private higher education institution. Total population sampling was utilized to ensure that all eligible participants were included. The evaluation covered participation in the HEART-IER and SMARTER Faculty Development Programs from 2022 to 2026.

Quantitative data included:

- Faculty rank progression
- Performance evaluation ratings
- Research outputs (publications and presentations)

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews focusing on:

- Program experiences
- Perceived learning outcomes
- Application of acquired competencies

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and longitudinal trend analysis to identify patterns over time. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic coding (open, axial, and selective), allowing for the identification of recurring themes aligned with the four levels of Kirkpatrick’s model.

Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured, and confidentiality of responses was maintained throughout the study.

### Results and Discussions

A consolidated presentation of **quantitative data across all objectives**

	Faculty Ranking			Faculty Performance Evaluation					Research Productivity from 2022 to present			
	from 2022 - Present		VI	from SY 2022-2023 to 2025-2026				VI	Publication	Presentation	Utilization	VI
	2022-2023	2025-2026		2023	2024	2025	2026					
Faculty 1	Assoc Prof. 3	Assoc Prof. 4	AR	4.08	4.05	4.37	4.71	MT to ET	8	6	6	High
Faculty 2	Asst. Prof. 4	Assoc Prof. 4	AR	4.24	4.44	4.16	4.53	MT to ET	4	2	3	Moderate
Faculty 3	Asst. Prof. 4	Assoc Prof. 3	AR	4.14	4.05	4.12	4.41	MT	3	1	3	Moderate
Faculty 4	Asst. Prof. 4	Assoc Prof. 4	AR	4.23	4.45	4.49	4.62	MT to ET	3	2	2	Moderate
Faculty 5	Asst. Prof. 4	Assoc Prof. 1	AR	4.40	4.42	4.4	4.29	MT	2	0	2	Low
Faculty 6	Asst. Prof. 4	Asst. Prof. 4	R	4.09	4.09	4.44	4.45	MT	3	1	3	Moderate

Faculty 7	Asst. Prof. 4	Asst. Prof. 4	R	4.27	4.16	4.22	4.35	MT	3	1	2	Moderate
Faculty 8	Asst. Prof. 3	Asst. Prof. 4	AR	4.57	4.42	4.52	4.65	MT to ET	3	3	3	Moderate
Faculty 9	Asst. Prof. 4	Assoc Prof. 4	AR	4.43	4.56	4.39	4.77	MT to ET	16	12	12	High
Faculty 10	Instructor 1	Asst. Prof. 4	AR	4.08	4.19	4.27	4.65	MT to ET	3	2	2	Moderate
Faculty 11	Asst. Prof. 3	Assoc Prof. 4	AR	4.20	4.21	4.3	4.61	MT to ET	4	2	3	Moderate
Faculty 12	Asst. Prof. 4	Professor 1	AR	4.27	4.33	4.34	4.60	MT to ET	3	1	2	Moderate
Faculty 13	Asst. Prof. 3	Asst. Prof. 4	AR	4.45	4.70	4.74	4.75	MT to ET	5	2	2	Moderate
Faculty 14	Custodian	Asst. Prof.1	AR	4.60	4.64	4.80	4.82	ET	6	3	2	Moderate

**Legend: VI – Verbal Interpretation; R – Retained; AR – Advanced in Rank; MT – Meets Target; ET – Exceeds Target**

Table above presents a consolidated view of faculty members' ranking progression, performance evaluation, and research productivity from 2022 to 2026. The data provide an integrated perspective of faculty development outcomes aligned with the objectives of the study.

The results showed that the majority of faculty members (12 out of 14) demonstrated advancement in rank (AR) over the period under study, while only two faculty members remained at their current rank (R). Notably, several faculty members progressed from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, one advanced to the Professor level, and another moved from Instructor to Assistant Professor. The high productivity of Faculty 1 and Faculty 9, compared with the more modest outputs of most others, is a good example of an important pattern of contribution to professional growth and the attainment of an institutional learning outcomes.

This pattern of upward mobility suggests a strong trend of career progression among participants and that participation to the faculty development program may have contributed to their ranking, satisfaction from the students and research productivity. As supported by Kohan et al. (2023), such progression may indicate that faculty development initiatives contribute to enhancing qualifications, competencies, and readiness for promotion. Similarly, Naqi et al. (2025) emphasized that consistent advancement among faculty reflects a positive institutional environment that supports professional growth and recognition.

In terms of performance evaluation, all faculty members consistently obtained ratings within the "Meets Target (MT)" to "Exceeds Target (ET)" range, with a noticeable shift toward "Exceeds Target" in the most recent year (2026). Earlier ratings (2023–2024) were predominantly within the MT range; however, by 2025–2026, most faculty achieved ratings between MT and ET, with several consistently attaining ET. This upward trend suggests continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness, as reflected in student evaluations, classroom observations, community extension service (CES) engagement, leadership roles, relationships with administrators and peers, marketing involvement, and institutional loyalty. These improvements may be associated with the sustained

implementation of faculty development programs. Consistent with this finding, Khuram et al. (2025) and Li (2024) noted that sustained high performance ratings among faculty indicate a strong culture of instructional quality, which can be attributed to effective faculty development initiatives.

Research productivity data revealed varying levels of engagement among faculty members. High productivity was observed in Faculty 1 (8 publications, 6 presentations, 6 utilizations) and Faculty 9 (16 publications, 12 presentations, 12 utilizations), while low to moderate productivity was evident among Faculty 5 and the majority of participants (10 out of 14 or 71%), respectively. These findings indicate that although research engagement is present across most faculty, productivity levels are not uniform. A small number of faculty demonstrate high research output, whereas others remain in the developmental stage. This suggests that while faculty development programs may have increased awareness and participation in research activities, additional support mechanisms—such as mentoring, workload management, and incentives—are necessary to achieve more consistent and widespread research productivity. This observation aligns with the findings of Alcazaren and Robinos (2022), who highlighted the importance of institutional support systems in sustaining research engagement among faculty.

When viewed collectively, the data reveal a positive alignment among faculty ranking, performance, and research productivity. Faculty members who advanced in rank generally demonstrated improved performance ratings and active engagement in research. High-performing faculty (e.g., Faculty 9) also exhibited high research productivity, suggesting a possible link between scholarly engagement and overall professional advancement. However, the variation in research outputs indicates that while improvements in teaching effectiveness are consistently achieved, research productivity remains an area requiring further development and targeted institutional support.

### **Qualitative data across all objectives**

#### **Objective 1: Faculty members' perceptions, satisfaction, and overall experiences**

##### **Themes:**

1. Positive and enriching training experience

2. Relevance and applicability of program components
3. Minor concerns on implementation and delivery

Faculty members generally described their experiences as highly positive, meaningful, and professionally enriching, highlighting how the programs responded to their needs as educators. Many participants emphasized that the training provided both direction and affirmation of their roles, as one shared that the experience was *“highly positive and enriching... responsive to the professional needs of faculty members... strengthening both my instructional competence and professional mindset”* (Faculty 2). Similarly, another participant described the program as *“very meaningful and beneficial... continuously motivate us... to improve our performance”* (Faculty 8), reinforcing the idea that the initiative sustained professional enthusiasm. Central to this positive perception was the relevance of specific components such as collaboration and feedback mechanisms, particularly the Professional Learning Communities, where faculty noted that *“collaborating with peers to share teaching strategies and address student learning gaps directly aligns with my role”* (Faculty 11).

Furthermore, participants expressed satisfaction with the structure and delivery of the program, noting that facilitators were *“very knowledgeable... making the content credible and easy to trust”* (Faculty 7), and that sessions were *“timely and a great reminder of what is our role as educators”* (Faculty 2). However, despite these positive experiences, some faculty also identified areas for improvement, particularly in implementation logistics. Concerns such as time management and redundancy were raised, with one participant noting that *“what can be improved on is the time management... sometimes, the content is also redundant”* (Faculty 14), while another observed issues in professionalism, particularly *“lack of punctuality among some attendees”* (Faculty 9). Overall, the findings suggest that while faculty perceptions are strongly favorable, enhancing delivery mechanisms could further strengthen program effectiveness.

### **Objective 2: Enhanced faculty competencies**

#### **Themes:**

1. Strengthened pedagogical and instructional competence
2. Integration of technology and innovative strategies
3. Holistic development (leadership, mindset, and professional identity)

The findings indicate that the HEART-IER and SMARTER programs are proxy indicators that may have enhanced

faculty competencies across multiple domains, particularly in pedagogy, technology integration, and professional growth. Faculty members reported becoming more effective and adaptive in their instructional practices, as one participant shared, *“I become more adaptable and confident enough in using a variety of teaching materials that improve my lessons”* (Faculty 3), while another emphasized a shift toward reflective teaching, stating, *“I have become more reflective and student-centered in my teaching”* (Faculty 12). This development was further supported by improved instructional alignment and strategies, with participants highlighting how training strengthened their ability to connect lessons with learning outcomes and student needs.

In addition, faculty demonstrated increased competence in integrating technology and innovative tools into their teaching. Practical applications such as digital platforms and interactive tools were commonly cited, including *“utilizing the activity (Quizizz) for my activities”* (Faculty 4) and *“integration of digital tools and multimedia resources... to make discussions more engaging”* (Faculty 8). These responses indicate that faculty development extended beyond theoretical understanding toward practical classroom implementation.

Beyond technical skills, the programs may also have contributed to holistic professional development, shaping faculty identity, leadership capacity, and mindset. Participants reflected on personal growth, noting that the training *“made me realize my purpose... and inspired me to develop my professional growth”* (Faculty 4), while others highlighted leadership development, such as *“I actively contribute to a culture of collaboration ensuring that our efforts align with institutional goals”* (Faculty 10). These findings suggest that faculty development programs not only build competencies but also foster a deeper sense of purpose and professional commitment.

### **Objective 3: Application of learning in teaching practices and professional roles**

#### **Themes:**

1. Shift toward student-centered and reflective teaching
2. Practical application of strategies and tools
3. Increased leadership and institutional engagement

Faculty responses reveal a clear transfer of learning into actual teaching practices and professional roles, demonstrating meaningful behavioral change. A dominant theme was the shift toward student-centered and reflective teaching approaches. Faculty described becoming more intentional in addressing student needs, with one participant explaining, *“I now provide feedback that helps learners*

*understand how to assess their own work*” (Faculty 2), while another emphasized a more compassionate approach, *“balancing rigorous subject requirements with a compassionate, student-centered approach”* (Faculty 6). This indicates that training influenced not only instructional techniques but also teaching philosophy.

Moreover, faculty provided concrete examples of how they applied learned strategies in their daily work. These included integrating varied instructional materials and tools, as seen in responses such as *“incorporating various materials that enhance the clarity and effectiveness of my teaching”* (Faculty 3) and *“integration of digital tools... to make discussions more engaging and interactive”* (Faculty 8). Additionally, faculty demonstrated adaptability and innovation in addressing classroom challenges, with one participant sharing a more empathetic approach to student situations, stating, *“I take time to understand the ‘why’ behind their situation... and meet them halfway”* (Faculty 14).

Beyond classroom practice, the programs also enhanced faculty engagement in leadership and institutional roles. Participants reported increased involvement in committees and initiatives, such as *“actively contribute to institutional initiatives”* (Faculty 3) and *“learned to be a facilitative leader”* (Faculty 11). Another faculty member highlighted a shift in perspective, stating that the program *“empowered me to embrace school activities... based on capability and potential”* (Faculty 7). These findings suggest that faculty development programs effectively translated into both improved teaching practices and strengthened institutional participation.

#### **Objective 4: Contribution on institutional outcomes**

##### **Themes:**

1. Improved teaching effectiveness and performance
2. Professional growth and career advancement
3. Emerging research engagement and institutional contribution

The findings indicate that the training programs may have contributed significantly to institutional outcomes, particularly in enhancing teaching effectiveness and supporting career development. Faculty members reported noticeable improvements in their teaching performance, often validated through evaluation results. One participant noted that *“recent evaluations noted better student engagement and lesson quality”* (Faculty 1), while another affirmed that *“the training programs positively contributed to my professional performance”* (Faculty 12). These improvements reflect how faculty development initiatives directly influence instructional quality.

In terms of professional growth, participants expressed increased confidence, motivation, and readiness for career advancement. Faculty described gaining direction and purpose, as one shared that the program *“gave me a sense of belonging... and foundation for my long-term career”* (Faculty 7), while another emphasized that it helped *“build greater confidence... to be an effective faculty member”* (Faculty 13). Additionally, some participants linked training participation to ranking and professional standing, noting that *“the program impact on my performance is evidenced by my current ranking status”* (Faculty 5).

With regard to research, the findings reveal an emerging but still developing area. Faculty expressed increased awareness and motivation toward research engagement, as reflected in statements such as *“the program motivated me and sparked my interest in pursuing research”* (Faculty 3) and *“I have recommitted to research... writing and publishing are vital contributions”* (Faculty 6). However, challenges remain, particularly in balancing workload and research demands, with one participant acknowledging that *“balancing teaching load with research remains a challenge”* (Faculty 10). Despite these constraints, faculty recognized the broader institutional value of research, noting that it *“acts as a catalyst for institutional excellence... and contributes to higher performance standards”* (Faculty 12). Overall, the results demonstrate that the programs may have contributed to improved teaching, professional advancement, and institutional alignment, while highlighting the need for sustained support in strengthening research productivity.

#### **Overall Interpretation**

The integrative analysis of the quantitative and qualitative findings revealed a generally positive impact of the faculty development programs across the four levels of Kirkpatrick’s evaluation model. In terms of Reaction, participants reported high levels of satisfaction, describing the programs as relevant, well-structured, and aligned with their professional needs. Under Learning, faculty members demonstrated enhanced competencies in instructional design, technology integration, and socio-emotional engagement, indicating successful knowledge acquisition and skills development. For Behavior, participants shared that they were able to apply the acquired competencies in teaching, curriculum development, and leadership responsibilities, reflecting meaningful behavioral change and transfer of learning into practice. At the Results level, institutional outcomes included advancement in faculty rank, consistently high performance evaluation ratings, and gradual increases in research productivity. However, research outputs varied significantly across participants, suggesting uneven development in this particular domain.

The integration of the quantitative and qualitative results further suggests that faculty development programs serve as enabling mechanisms for both professional growth and institutional advancement. High satisfaction levels indicate a strong alignment between program design and faculty needs, supporting previous studies that identify relevance as a major determinant of training effectiveness (Alsagheer et al., 2022). More importantly, the transition from learning to actual workplace application demonstrates that these programs extend beyond knowledge acquisition and contribute to sustained professional practice, consistent with findings of Cotta et al. (2024). Institutional improvements in rank progression and performance ratings also point to measurable organizational benefits. Nevertheless, the variability in research productivity highlights the differentiated nature of faculty development needs, particularly in areas that require long-term mentorship, resource allocation, and structured research support systems (Foroughi et al., 2024). Overall, the findings underscore the importance of adopting comprehensive evaluation frameworks, such as Kirkpatrick's model, to provide deeper insights into how faculty development initiatives contribute to the strategic goals and quality culture of higher education institutions.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This study demonstrates that faculty development programs contribute meaningfully to improvements in teaching practices, professional engagement, and selected institutional outcomes. By applying a multi-level evaluation framework, the study highlights the importance of aligning faculty development initiatives with institutional priorities and quality assurance systems. The findings position faculty development not as a peripheral activity, but as a strategic lever for achieving sustained educational excellence. To sustain and strengthen these gains, it is recommended that the institution implement a structured research mentoring and incentive program within the next academic year to increase faculty research productivity, and institutionalize an annual evaluation to ensure continuous, evidence-based improvement of faculty development initiatives.

## Limitations and Future Research

The study is limited by its small sample size and single-institution context, which constrain generalizability. Future research should:

- Include larger and more diverse samples
- Employ inferential statistical techniques
- Examine downstream effects on student learning outcomes

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