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Assessing the Impact of Mentoring Experiences on Mentee Job Performance of Early-Career Administrators at the University of Cape Coast: The Role of Mentee Commitment

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Abstract
This study examines the impact of mentoring experiences on the mentee job performance of early-career university administrators at the University of Cape Coast (UCC). It emphasizes mentee commitment as a moderating variable. The study used a quantitative research design with a well-structured questionnaire distributed to 130 junior and assistant registrars at UCC. Data were collected, using Google Forms and paper questionnaire to achieve a response rate of 63.1%. The relationships among mentoring experiences, mentee commitment and job performance were examined, using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that mentoring experiences favorably affect job performance, when mentee commitment serves as a strong moderator. Mentoring experience as a single variable did not directly affect job performance. This underscores the critical importance of mentee commitment in augmenting mentoring efficacy and strengthening job performance outcomes at UCC. The findings indicate that UCC and Institutions of Higher Education need the combination of formal and informal mentoring frameworks that promote mentee commitment. This move will augment the performance and development of early-career administrators, resulting in more effective leadership and enhanced institutional outcomes.
Keywords: Mentoring experience, mentee commitment, mentee job performance, higher education institutions
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1. Introduction

Mentoring is crucial for professional advancement, especially in higher education administration (Johnson & Griffin, 2024; Mullen & Klimaitis, 2021). Experiencing mentoring helps early career university administrators to deal with difficult tasks, institutional problems and leadership duties (Baker, Gonzales, & Terosky, 2020; Bisnath, 2025). The mentoring process provides guidance, emotional support and development of skills and this contributes to better work performance and career satisfaction (Asogwa & Mathenjwa, 2023). This study examines the moderating effect of mentee commitment on the linkage among mentoring and job performance, and suggests ways to enhance mentoring processes among early-career administrators (Gamage et al., 2021). The process of mentoring, we argue, contributes to the professional development among early-career administrators since it provides career guidance and emotional support (Choudhary, 2025; Bisnath, 2025). Systematic mentoring programmes are valuable for the University of Cape Coast (UCC), a tertiary institution in Ghana whose administrators are responsible for leadership and operating functions. Gupta and Gupta (2021) have provided some very useful insights into how mentoring develops leadership skills, job contentment and work performance, and serves as vital attributes for professionals who seek both professional and psycho-social support (Vail et al., 2020; Elliott, 2020). Informal mentoring also contributes very vital roles particularly for mid-stage and last-stage administrators in their careers. It provides flexible, context-driven support (Brauckmann, Pashiardis & Ärlestig, 2023; Noman et al., 2024). These partnerships offer tailored support, assisting administrators in managing intricate responsibilities (Junn et al., 2023). Universities such as UCC must acknowledge the essence of both formal and informal mentorship frameworks which guarantees extensive support for all personnel.

For mentoring to work, the mentee has to demonstrate commitment. Having a commitment is a sign of psychological involvement, retention and motivation of the mentee (Gisbert-Trejo et al., 2020). Research indicates that committed administrators are likely to integrate and act on mentor feedback, thus increasing the quality of performance (Gisbert-Trejo et al., 2020). At UCC, early-career administrators who actively engage with mentors can improve their leadership skills, decision-making and job performance (Klein, 2021; Dhanpat et al., 2025). Consequently, mentee commitment is a crucial moderating variable in the impact of mentoring on job performance which should be emphasized in mentoring initiatives for management-level administrators.

Mentoring relationships work best when both the mentor and the mentee are passionately involved. Kumari et al. (2022) and Giacumo, Chen and Seguinot-Cruz (2020) are of the view that committed mentees are more willing

to sharing knowledge by doing things to as a mentee academy. This raises mentees commitment level high which can possibly integrate knowledge, and enhance work methods and eventually job performance. For support managers, engagement is crucial to leadership effectiveness and decision making (Gamage et al., 2021; Gupta & Gupta, 2021). It is critically necessary that the mentee is available and involved in the mentoring relationship for the mentoring process to be successful as well as for improvements in job performance.

It is quite interesting to note the lack of structured mentoring programmes for early career administrators at UCC. It is true that academic staff and students receive significant mentorship support, but early-career administrators frequently feel isolated, and this really does not help their professional growth and results in low job satisfaction and increased turnover rates (Brossette, 2021; Gander, Girardi & Paull, 2019). Gupta and Gupta (2021) contend that the incorporation of mentoring programmes into an institution's culture enhances leadership development, improves job performance, and yields benefits for the organization such as UCC. If UCC does not have these kinds of programmes, it could limit the potential of its administrative professionals and could hurt the effectiveness of the whole organization (Walden, 2021).

Mentoring programmes, can only work if they are part of the organization's culture and have the support of the leaders (Adeniyi et al., 2024). Earlier research finds that, initiatives aligned with institutional goals and embedded in the culture, normally bring better outcomes (Bilderback, 2024; Jackson & Rowe, 2023; Coplan & Evans, 2021). UCC must develop a long-term and comprehensive mentoring system for early-career administrators who both formally and informally support them to provide them the assistance they deserve. Institutions that actually cherish mentorship provide the kind of spaces whereby the administrator feels they get to apply what they have learned to do better at work in order to increase the performance (Sezgin et al., 2020; Johnson & Griffin, 2024; Ahsan, 2025). Nonetheless, there remain gaps in knowledge about how mentoring influences the job performance of early-career administrators, particularly in African contexts like UCC.

At times, the current techniques of mentoring fail to deal with the individual issues that early-career administrators encounter (Gibson,2021). These include managing multiple roles, coping with intricate organizational structures, and satisfying the expectations of various stakeholders (Gupta & Gupta, 2021; Gamage et al., 2021). Hence, one needs to investigate how formal mentorship programmes support the professional growth of early-career administrators within UCC. It is for this reason that this study addresses the loopholes by investigating the operation of mentoring to improve mentee work performance. The role of mentee commitment in mentoring relationships, particularly in university administration, has not been tested well. Although mentee commitment is known to be crucial for successful mentoring, its specific impact on management-level administrators' performance has not been rigorously tested (Ayuningrat et al., 2022). To develop customized mentoring programmes for newly appointed administrators at UCC, it is important to understand this relationship (Gupta & Gupta, 2021; Gamage et al., 2021). The study intends to fill this gap will improve mentorship processes, which will help early-career administrators at UCC and similar institutions grow professionally and yield better job performance. This study, backed by the social exchange theory, Kram's mentoring model, and commitment theory investigates the reciprocal dynamics of mentoring, its career and psychological functions and the moderating influence of mentee commitment on job performance (Kram, 1985; Gupta & Gupta, 2021). It also provides actionable recommendations for UCC and comparable institutions to improve mentoring processes, elevate the performance of early-career administrators, and enrich the scholarly discourse on mentoring in higher education institution.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) was developed by Blau in 1964 with the aid of reciprocal exchanges to conceptualize relationships, which provides sound means of evaluating mentoring relationships. The concept is centered` on the mutual interactions that create the mentor-mentee relationship. The act of mentoring is a mutually beneficial association between the mentee and the mentor. Satisfaction for the mentee comes when they witness the development, but the mentee is given advice and counseling (Johnson & Griffin, 2024). UCC early-career administrators would seek chances to engage themselves in the act of mentoring when they feel the participation exchange would help them grow in the profession and gain new skills.

Kumari et al. (2022) and Gamage et al. (2021) carried out a study which proposes that perceived usefulness and ease by the mentees are the most prominent motivators of participation and professional success among the me``ntees. SET explains the justification in favour of commitment and inclusion of mentees, especially the newcomers in the administration profession, in mentoring schemes whenever they perceive the share in the

transfer of information, counseling, and access to career growth as useful. Such studies as adopted the social exchange theory (SET), as Gisbert-Trejo & González-Morales' (2020) and applied by Ayuningrat et al. (2022), reveal that mutual advantage is the foundation of successful relationships in mentoring, and that makes it especially useful in educational settings.

2.1.2. Kram's Mentoring Model

Kram's (1985) mentoring model outlines two chief functions: professional functionality and psychosocial functionality. Professional functions facilitate the mentee's advancement in their profession, enhance job performance, and broaden networking opportunities, while psychosocial functions focus on enhancing self-esteem and providing emotional support (Williams, Scandura, & Castro, 2021). The professional development of early-career administrators in higher educational institution is contingent upon the performance of both functions. Morrow et al. (2024) and Gupta & Gupta (2021) emphasize the importance of career and psychosocial mentoring. They suggest that early-career administrators who receive comprehensive mentoring support demonstrate improved job satisfaction and performance. In addition, mentees' resilience, an essential attribute of quality leadership, has been shown to strengthened through the psychosocial support provided through mentoring (Asogwa & Mathenjwa, 2023). Kram's model finds additional support in recent evidence confirming the development in administrative performance and succession management through career mentoring (Ali, Mahmood & Mehreen, 2019; Phillips, 2020). In addition, mentorship programmes providing both career and psychosocial support have been shown to boost retention and job satisfaction among early-career post-secondary educators (Rinfret et al., 2023). Early-career UCC administrators are better positioned to perform effectively and enhance performance through the combined application of both professional aid and psychosocial aid, thereby facilitating an easier transition to leadership positions.

2.1.3 Commitment Theory

Commitment theory was propounded by Meyer and Allen (1991) who examined the psychological responses by individuals toward their organization or role. Commitment theory among mentors emphasizes the need for mentee participation, with the assumption that an active mentee will perform better through active participation, learning integration in responsibilities, and the application of criticism. This commitment is crucial for the senior-level administrators of UCC, as it enables them to implement new strategies, and contributes to the university's success (McDaniel & Einstein, 2020). Studies conducted by Gupta and Gupta (2021) and Morrow et al. (2024), strongly support the idea that committed mentees exhibit increased levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and performance. Additionally, Asogwa and Mathenjwa (2023) emphasize that the efficacy of the mentoring relationship is directly influenced by the of the mentee making it a critical element in the development of leadership. The efficacy of the mentoring process, according to Egboka and Francis-Okorie (2024), can be impeded by inadequate mentee commitment, and this is exemplified by a reluctance to engage in mentorship, negatively affecting job performance. Such findings substantiate the proposition that mentees must play an active role in the act of mentoring, particularly in institutions for high-learning such as UCC, where institutional growth must be attained through the best administrative leadership. commitment theory expresses significant details about the influence of mentee commitment towards mentoring outcomes, which is crucial in the development of administrative performance and leadership skills (Kumari et al., 2022).

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Mentoring Experiences

Mentoring is essential for the career development of new university administrators who are transitioning into diverse and more challenging managerial roles. Career advancement and performance on the job are sped up by the mentorship experience, according to Briscoe (2019). Two major roles are listed by Kram's (1985) model of mentoring: professional assistance, for instance, job mapping, acquisition of skills, and championing, as well as psychosocial assistance, or emotional nurturing and self-worth assistance. Both roles are needed by mentees to enhance solving leadership problems (Johnson, 2022). Career support enables managers to acquire valuable information and develop relationships, which enables them to be in a position to accomplish operational and strategic responsibilities (Haviland, Ortiz & Henriques, 2023; Gupta & Gupta, 2021; Vail et al., 2020). Leadership requires psychosocial support for the accomplishment of success, as it enables psychological stability and self-confidence, which are enhanced by emotional resilience (Asogwa & Mathenjwa, 2023).

It is crucial for early career administrators at UCC to have mentoring experiences, as they assist them in achieving a balance between their professional and personal responsibilities, and provide the necessary support to enhance their performance. Mentoring experiences are of paramount importance. Effective mentoring is closely associated with enhanced job performance and increases job satisfaction (Carter & Youssef-Morgan, 2019). Leaders who are capable of contributing to the success of an organization are those who establish

relationships that satisfy both their professional and psychosocial requirements (Rinfret et al., 2023). Mentoring is not merely an aid for providing assistance but also part of the construction for effective and triumphant Higher Institution administrators.

2.2.2 Job Performance

Job performance for administration purposes is the extent to which employees fulfill the needs for the job and activities allocated (Saidin et al., 2024; Johari et al., 2019). This comprises the following for early career administrators: the ability to make shrewd decisions, be an effective leader, and perform efficiently. Performing activities efficiently is completing activities in the right and timely manner. Leadership is the ability to inspires employees, make decisions aligned with the organization's vision, and lead teams. Strategic decision-making comprises making shrewd decisions that enable Higher Institutions to reach long-term objectives (Mpofu, S., & Chasokela, D., 2025). Such performance categories are crucial due to the fact that administrators perform many responsibilities and play an integral part in institution accomplishment. Consistent with Campbell's (1990) paradigm, performance in jobs is multidimensional, which suggests that technical skills (and soft skills) dominate the paradigm. To attain jobs, early career administrators require the following: information connected with responsibilities, access to resources, as well as the patronage for the effective mentors (Macmillan, Johnson, & Wadley, 2023). Mentoring has proven itself in performance improvements by providing structured support to enhance the advancement of leadership skills and decision-making skills, as well as address problems with administrations. Mentoring is a critical component of UCC that enables administrators to effectively perform both operational and strategic responsibilities (Aithal & Maiya, 2023).

At UCC, job success is associated with mentorship experiences that facilitate personal and professional growth, ensuring that administrators possess the necessary skills to excel in their roles (Kumari et al., 2022; Nwuke & Nwanguma, 2024). All the accomplishments by the university and the long-term performance by its leaders all function greatly based on the development of the performance of work, satisfaction on the job, and leadership skills by the best form of mentoring (Strawser, Smith, & Rubenking, 2022). This also assists the institution to reach its all-motivating goals for quality and performance, balanced with the needs for the job.

2.2.3 Mentee Commitment

Mentee commitment is the extent to which the mentee is committed, intrinsically motivated, and engaged in the relationship for mentoring (Faisal, 2024). In order for the processes for mentoring to be successful with the leader emerging as the mentee with the skills for successful leadership, the mentee will have to commit. This committed mentee is the individual who undertakes activities, establishes goals just like the goals for the mentor, and utilizes the use of the issuance for the purpose of performance improvements (Toni et al., 2025). This commitment has an explicit impact on performance in the workplace where the active mentees will utilize the advice coming with the word of their mentors for the better development of their careers and for the contribution of the institution.

Mentee commitment comprises goal direction, responsibility, initiative and involvement for the relationship for mentoring (Mullen & Klimaitis, 2021; Gong, Van Swol & Wang, 2022). In the sense that they have the strong desire to achieve certain goals, the goal-directed mentees will present themselves differently. Conversely, responsible mentors who will initiate the process for making sure that they develop themselves will also present differently. A mentee’s tenacity and the extent of their investment in the mentoring relationship indicate their commitment towards the quality of the relationship (Kumari et al., 2022).

The efficacy of formal mentoring programmes designed for early-career administrators at UCC is contingent upon the commitment of the mentee. Mentees who are committed to their role are more likely to engage in developmental activities, pursue challenges, and demonstrate increased responsibility (Zachary & Fain, 2022). This parallels the overall tendency for higher education, whereby the connection between mentorship and performance success is also reinforced by the investment by mentees (Kumari et al., 2022; Johnson & Griffin, 2024; Riebel, 2023). Hence, helping mentees at UCC to preserve their investment will help improve their leadership skills as well as help the institution attain its strategic goals.

2.3 Development of Hypothesis

2.3.1 Mentoring Experiences and Job Performance of Mentees

The strong and favourable correlation between job performance and mentoring experiences is widely recognized in numerous disciplines and across the globe. Kumari et al. (2022) opine that high-quality mentoring experiences provide the mentee with advice, information transfer, and emotional support, thereby enhancing their performance at work. Causal evidence has been demonstrated in some studies, suggesting that mentoring can

significantly improve job performance. For example, Zarghoni and Rasool (2021) demonstrated that the quality of mentoring led to substantial enhancements in performance ratings, whereas Law, Hales and Busenbark (2020) reported that mentoring had a positive impact on student academic performance. The current empirical literature indicates a strong, positive correlation between work performance and mentoring experiences.

For instance, Riebel (2023) established a vital association between job performance and mentoring among millennials in U.S. post-secondary education, with the effect of mentoring on total job performance standing at 40%. Also, Suparjo and Sunarsih (2019) confirmed the significant positive correlation between the career mentorship and job performance in private organizations in Indonesia whose value equaled 0.763. These findings reinforce that contextual feature such as collaboration, initiative, as well as individual task performance, are improved by mentoring (Ovais & Jain, 2025). The act of mentoring also influences performance via channels for the transfer of knowledge and skills (Swanson et al., 2020), psychosocial support (Botha & Hugo, 2021), as well as career advocacy (Dasselle et al., 2021). Mentoring relations that are dysfunctional, for instance, with the mentor disdaining or using a mentee (Laye, 2024; Tuma et al., 2021), or performance harmful effects caused by the power distance or age hierarchy prevailing in the context (Banerjee-Batist, Reio Jr, & Rocco, 2019), are counterproductive. It is therefore proposed that:

H_1: *Mentoring experience positively influences mentee's job performance.*

Research has long indicated that the effect of mentoring is highly appreciated by the commitment of the mentee. Gisbert-Trejo et al. (2020) establish that, mentee motivation and commitment emerged as the most predictable antecedents of success for inter-organizational mentees, even ahead of demographic antecedent age and sex. Fineout-Overholt and Levin (2024) also established the relevance of commitment by the mentee for the achievement of favorable outcomes. They verified that mentees who were resolute in the mentoring process improved the way they performed at work, persisted at tasks, and better applied what they had learned. In similar research by Hendri (2019), it was observed that job performance was significantly influenced by organizational commitment, which supports the view that a committed worker is predisposed to excel in their position.

This is supported by the frameworks of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). SET stipulates that the investment by the mentees is repaid by the addition of their involvement, hence the better performance results. SDT demonstrates that intrinsic motivation increases with the satisfaction of the psychological needs of the mentee, such as the need for autonomy, competence, as well as the need for relatedness. This leads to improved performance and increased commitment (Firzly et al., 2022). However, the literature continues to lack a quantitative assessment of mentee commitment as a moderator in mentoring research, despite the fact that it has a strong foundation in theory and qualitative research. Majority of studies assume its importance, but they fail to formally assess its moderating function (Monigan, 2024; Distor & Nunez, 2023; Ivey & Dupré, 2022). Based on this, it hypothesized that:

H_2: *The relationship between mentee job performance and mentoring experiences is positively influenced by the mentee's commitment.*

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, as indicated in Figure 1, illustrates the relations between the varying components of the phenomenon of the study. In the following figure, the hypotheses designed and experimented with the use of analytical approaches are displayed. The relevant theories that substantiate the findings offer a more detailed understanding of the connections between the constructs.

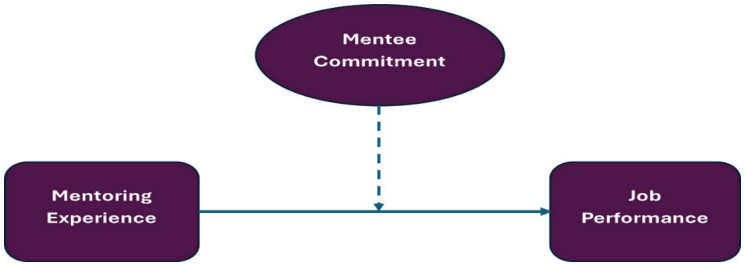


Figure 1
Source: Authors' construct

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design, Sample and Data Acquisition

This research utilized a quantitative methodology to investigate the relationships between mentoring experiences, mentee commitment, and job performance among early-career university administrators at UCC. A quantitative approach is particularly suitable for analyzing patterns and correlations among variables, as it facilitates statistical analysis to yield dependable results (Creswell, 2014). The research focused on Junior Assistant Registrars and Assistant Registrars, who were selected from UCC's Human Resource records, including a total of 130 personnel. There were 44 Junior Assistant Registrars and individuals in analogous positions, and 86 Assistant Registrars and individuals in related roles (such as Accountants and Procurement Officers). Due to the small and accessible population, a census methodology was employed to ensure universal participation, hence enhancing the representativeness of the results (Fink, 2017). The study was initially as a result of an evaluation of the effectiveness of early-career administrators mentoring relationships on their performance. The questionnaire was administered between July to August, 2025 with a written statement indicating that the information provided will be solely used for the purpose and confidentiality is assured. Data were collected using two methods: Google Forms (40 responses) and paper questionnaires (42 responses). This resulted in 82 completed questionnaires and a response rate of 63.1%. The level of response rate is respectable for the purposes of survey studies, wherein the regular rate lies between 30% and 60% (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014).

The decision to employ a census method stemmed from the manageable size of the population and the necessity for all pertinent participants to provide comprehensive data to prevent sampling bias (Babbie, 2013). Stratified analysis was employed by classifying participants into Junior Assistant Registrar equivalents and Assistant Registrar equivalents to ensure clarity and consistency with the rank structure (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). To reduce potential bias, the study utilized a stratified random sampling method, classifying participants by departmental affiliation and thereafter performing random selections from each stratum (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). Despite the achievement of not-so-impressive rate of response, the study recognized the possibility for non-response bias that would dampen the degree of generalizability (Groves, 2006). The data collection covered eight weeks, allowing adequate time for responses.

3.2 Developing Metrics and Surveys

A structured questionnaire was developed for data collection, following an extensive review of the literature on mentorship and administrative efficacy in higher education. The questionnaire had four sections including Demographics (Section A), Mentoring Experience (Section B), Mentee Commitment (Section C) and Mentee Job Performance (Section D). The response was based on a five-point Likert scale, and 1 represented "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represented "Strongly Agree." Mentoring experience (ME) was measured using a 15-item scale borrowed from the past (Ensher & Murphy, 2011). The research gauged Mentee Job Performance (MJP) through the application of a 12-item scale by Pradhan and Jena (2017). Additionally, Mentee Commitment (MC) was gauged through the application of a 15-item tool used by previous researchers (Jackson, 2004).

The instruments underwent stringent validation and reliability assessments. The psychometric properties of the scale, including reliability, validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity, were statistically validated to ensure response consistency and indicator reliability. The findings presented in Table 2 (Outer Loadings), Table 3 (Construct Reliability and Validity), and Table 4 (Discriminant Validity: HTMT) indicate no issues with reliability or validity. Some of the factors were deleted from the model with great care as their loadings were below that which was desirable. As Hair et al. (2014) have contended, factors whose outer loadings are below 0.4 should be excluded in an effort to maximize the performance of the model. This is in accordance with their recommendations. Table 2 presents the measurement items, their loadings, mean (M), and standard deviation (SD) for the retained indicators to ensure reliability.

A non-response bias t-test, as per Armstrong and Overton (1977), found no significant differences between the early and late responders. Common method bias (CMB) was addressed procedurally through the request of various administrative departments to guarantee diverse respondent perspectives. Statistically, CMB was inspected through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis following Hair et al. (2017). VIF values of all measurement items fell in the range of 1.598 to 4.146, which is way less than the conservative cut-off value of 5.0. This indicates an absence of unwanted multicollinearity caused by a general method factor, strongly verifying that CMB is not an issue in this study.

3.3 Analytical Method

In the present study, SPSS (Version 27) and Smart PLS-SEM have been used for handling the data. SPSS was used to obtain the descriptive statistics, consisting of frequencies, percentages, means, along with standard deviations, providing an introduction to the data with the description on the distribution for the demographic variables for the respondents. Descriptive statistics elucidate the distribution of data and offer a comprehensive overview of the salient characteristics of a sample (Field, 2013). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed in Smart PLS-SEM for hypothesis testing and model estimation. PLS-SEM is optimal for analyzing complex models that include latent variables, especially for assessing direct and moderating effects while simultaneously calculating path coefficients (Hair et al., 2017). This method allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the relationships among constructs, accounting for measurement error (Chin, 1998). The investigation commenced by evaluating the measurement model to confirm the reliability and validity of the constructs. Subsequent to the assessment of the measurement model, the structural model was analyzed to evaluate the path coefficients and moderating effects. We employed bootstrapping to assess the statistical significance of these path coefficients. Efron and Tibshirani (1993) endorse this technique for verifying model parameters in PLS-SEM.

3.4 Measurement Evaluation

Table 1 presents the measurement model quality criteria, including reliability thresholds (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq 0.7$, CR ≥ 0.7), convergent validity standards (AVE > 0.5), discriminant validity (HTMT < 1), and multicollinearity benchmarks (VIF < 5) adopted from Benitez et al. (2020), Guenther et al. (2023), and Becker et al. (2023). We used Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) to calculate the reliability of the constructs. Both measures are widely used in the social sciences as indicators of internal consistency. The findings depicted that all the CA values (Mentee Job Performance = 0.910, Mentee Commitment = 0.919, Mentoring Experience = 0.919) and CR values (rho_c) (Mentee Job Performance = 0.930, Mentee Commitment = 0.932, Mentoring Experience = 0.928) exceeded the recommended cut-off value of 0.70, hence verifying the constructs' excellent reliability. Then, we employed Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to assess whether the constructs demonstrated adequate convergent validity. The AVE values came out fairly robust Mentee Job Performance was 0.688, Mentee Commitment was 0.632, and Mentoring Experience came in at 0.647 well beyond the minimum 0.50. This reveals that there is plenty of convergent validity at play. For discriminant validity testing, we introduced the HTMT ratio. Table 4 shows that all of the HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85 (the highest value was 0.799 between Mentoring Experience and Mentee Commitment). This means that the constructs are well-developed and different from each other.

Table 1: Measurement Model Criteria

Quality Dimensions	Criteria	Sources
Reliability-Cronbach's alpha	≥0.7	Benitez *et al*. (2020)
Reliability-Rho_a	≥0.7	Guenther *et al*. (2023)
Composite reliability	≥0.7	
Convergent validity-average variance extracted	>0.5	
Discriminant validity-HTMT ratio	<1	Becker *et al*. (2023)
Common method bias-Inner VIF	<5	
Multi-collinearity-Outer VIF	<5	

Structural Model	Indices	Sources
Indicator reliability	Indicator loading >0.7; $p \leq 0.05$	
Coefficients and effect size	Unstandardized beta f^2: Effect size values above 0.35, 0.15, and 0.02 are interpreted as strong, moderate, and weak respectively	Benitez *et al*. (2020)
Coefficient of determination	R^2: Results above 0.67 (Substantial), 0.33 (Moderate) and 0.19 (Weak)	Benitez *et al*. (2020)

Table 1 summarizes the measurement model quality criteria, including reliability thresholds, convergent and discriminant validity standards, and multicollinearity benchmarks employed in this study.

Table 2: Demographics

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	49	59.8
Female	33	40.2
Age		
30–35 years	7	8.5
36–40 years	36	43.9
41–45 years	22	26.8
46-50 years	4	4.9
51 years and above	13	15.9
Level Education		
Masters	61	74.4
Professional Certificate	14	17.1
PhD	7	8.5
Rank of Staff		
Junior Assistant Registrar and analogous ranks	47	57.3
Assistant Registrar and analogous ranks	35	42.7
Years of Work Experience		
Less than 5 years	7	8.5
6–10 years	12	14.6
11–15 years	27	32.9
16–20 years	18	22.0
21 years and above	18	22.0
Duration of Mentoring		
6–12 months	21	25.6
1 and half years	12	14.6
2 years and above	49	59.8
Mentoring Type Adopted		
One on one mentoring	64	78.0
Peer mentoring	4	4.9
Informal mentoring	14	17.1
Frequency of Communication During Mentoring		
Daily	7	8.5
Weekly	10	12.2
Monthly	34	41.5
Rarely	31	37.8
Mentee's Commitment Level During Mentoring		
Very Low	4	4.9
Low	17	20.7
Moderate	31	37.8
High	14	17.1
Very High	16	19.5
Mentee's Level of Satisfaction after mentoring		
Very Dissatisfied	8	9.8
Slightly Dissatisfied	4	4.9
Neutral	20	24.4
Satisfied	32	39.0
Highly Satisfied	18	22.0
Contribution of Mentoring to Professional and Personal Development		
Not at all	2	2.4
Slightly	12	14.6
Moderately	18	22.0
Significantly	34	41.5
Very Significantly	16	19.5

Table 2 shows the demographic information about the people who answered. Most of them (59.8%) were men, and the biggest group was people aged 36 to 40 (43.9%). The majority of participants possessed a Master's degree (74.4%) and were employed as Junior Assistant Registrars (57.3%). 32.9% of the people had worked for 11 to 15 years, and 59.8% had been mentored for more than two years. The most common method was one-on-one mentoring (78%), and communication happened often, with 41.5% of the time happening monthly. Respondents said they were committed to different levels, with 37.8%, saying they were moderately committed. Also, 39% were happy with their mentoring experience, which shows that it was a good one.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Mentee Job Performance	0.910	0.930	0.930	0.688
Mentee Commitment	0.919	0.950	0.932	0.632
Mentoring Experience	0.919	1.018	0.928	0.647

Table 3 shows how reliable and valid the study variables are. The Cronbach's alpha values for Mentee Job Performance (0.910), Mentee Commitment (0.919), and Mentoring Experience (0.919) show that these measures are very consistent with each other. The composite reliability values (rho_a and rho_c) are higher than the acceptable level of 0.70, which shows that the constructs are reliable. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are higher than 0.50, which shows that each construct has convergent validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	MENTEE JOB PERFORMANCE	Mentee Commitment	Mentoring Experience	Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience
Mentee Job Performance				
Mentee Commitment	0.632			
Mentoring Experience	0.366	0.799		
Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience	0.241	0.098	0.166	

The discriminant validity is shown in Table 4 via the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). It is reflected by the values that all the constructs have adequate discriminant validity as there is no HTMT value higher than 0.85. The Mentee Job Performance, Mentee Commitment and Mentoring Experience HTMTs are all much below the cutoff, towards the indication that the constructs are different from each other. The interaction term, Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience, contains low correlations, thereby affirming discriminant validity.

Table 5: Outer VIF

Code Name	Items	VIF
MC13	I felt I have enough autonomy to take initiatives and make decisions in my work at the tail end of the mentoring period.	2.674
MC15	I was encouraged to take responsibility for my professional growth during mentoring.	2.766
MC2	I consistently followed up on advice or guidance given by my mentor.	3.132
MC3	I made efforts to build and sustain my mentoring relationship.	3.085
MC6	I derived satisfaction from participating in mentoring activities with my mentor.	2.297
MC7	I cared deeply about the success of my mentoring experience.	3.110
MC8	I clearly identified with the goals of my mentoring relationship.	2.699
MC9	The values promoted through my mentoring relationship aligned with my own career goals.	3.726
ME1	My mentor challenges me to think clearly about my career aspirations.	2.766
ME12	My mentor supports me when I demonstrate commitment.	3.897
ME15	My mentor and I shared high quality mentoring relationship.	3.194
ME2	My mentor encourages me to improve certain aspects of my personality.	2.635
ME5	My mentor provides critical feedback on my own work output.	3.299
ME6	My mentor expects me to justify the decisions I make.	1.598
ME8	My mentor provided opportunities for me to demonstrate my skills and assess my readiness to take on high level tasks.	3.570
MJP12	I can communicate effectively with colleagues to solve problems and make decisions.	4.146
MJP3	I can complete my assignments on time.	4.005
MJP4	I am able to manage change in my job whenever the situation demands.	2.970
MJP5	I can effectively support my work team during periods of change.	3.729
MJP8	I am willing to extend help to co-workers when they ask or need support.	3.894
MJP9	I like to take on extra responsibilities beyond my regular duties.	3.265
Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience		1.000

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for the study's constructs are shown in Table 5. When looking for multicollinearity, VIF is used, and values above 5 are a sign of possible problems. Most of the items, like MC9 (VIF = 3.726), ME12 (VIF = 3.897), and MJP12 (VIF = 4.146), have VIF values that are acceptable, which means that there is little multicollinearity. The item ME6, on the other hand, has a VIF of 1.598, which means there is no multicollinearity issue. The interaction term "Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience" has a VIF of 1.000, which means that the two variables are not correlated with each other. The VIF values in the table show that multicollinearity is not a big problem, which means that the model can be used to make accurate predictions.

Table 6: Inner VIF

	Mentee Job Performance	Mentee Commitment	Mentoring Experience	Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience
Mentee Job Performance				
Mentee Commitment	**2.298**			
Mentoring Experience	**2.330**			
Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience	**1.033**			

Table 6 shows the Inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for the model's latent constructs and their interactions. VIF is used to check for multicollinearity among the constructs in the structural model. The VIF values for Mentee Job Performance (1.033), Mentee Commitment (2.298), and Mentoring Experience (2.330) are all below the threshold of 5, which means that there are no major multicollinearity problems in the model. The interaction term "Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience" has a VIF of 1.033, which is also well below the acceptable threshold, which means that the interaction term does not add multicollinearity. These results show that the constructs are clearly different from each other and that the model's estimates are reliable. The low VIF values show that there is little overlap in the variance explained by each construct, which ensures strong results.

3.5 Structural Model

Table 7: Indicator reliability

	Outer loadings
MC13 <- Mentee Commitment	0.716
MC15 <- Mentee Commitment	0.856
MC2 <- Mentee Commitment	0.818
MC3 <- Mentee Commitment	0.827
MC6 <- Mentee Commitment	0.701
MC7 <- Mentee Commitment	0.864
MC8 <- Mentee Commitment	0.758
MC9 <- Mentee Commitment	0.805
ME1 <- Mentoring Experience	0.829
ME12 <- Mentoring Experience	0.832
ME15 <- Mentoring Experience	0.819
ME2 <- Mentoring Experience	0.789
ME5 <- Mentoring Experience	0.789
ME6 <- Mentoring Experience	0.787
ME8 <- Mentoring Experience	0.786
Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience -> Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience	1.000
MJP12 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.830
MJP3 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.813
MJP4 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.857
MJP5 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.883
MJP8 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.817
MJP9 <- Mentee Job Performance	0.771

Table 7 shows the outer loadings for the measurement model, which show how reliable the indicators are for measuring the latent constructs of Mentee Commitment, Mentoring Experience, and Mentee Job Performance.

The loadings for Mentee Commitment range from 0.701 to 0.864, which means that the indicators are moderately to highly reliable. MC7 has the highest loading at 0.864. The loadings for the Mentoring Experience indicators (ME1 to ME8) range from 0.786 to 0.832, which means they are reliable. ME12 has the highest loading at 0.832. Also, the indicators for Mentee Job Performance (MJP3, MJP4, and MJP5) have loadings between 0.771 and 0.883, which means they are very reliable. MJP5 has the highest loading at 0.883. The indicators as a whole show that they are very reliable, which supports the validity of the structural model.

Table 8: Path Coefficient

	Beta	f-square	T statistics	P values
Mentee Commitment -> Mentee Job Performance	0.784	0.531	5.077	0.000
Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience -> Mentee Job Performance	0.224	0.116	2.138	0.033
Mentoring Experience -> Mentee Job Performance	-0.166	0.024	0.838	0.402

The path coefficients, f-square, t-statistics, and p-values for the study's constructs are shown in Table 8. There is a strong positive relationship between Mentee Commitment and Mentee Job Performance, with a beta of 0.784, an f-square of 0.531, a t-statistic of 5.077, and a p-value of 0.000. This means that Mentee Commitment has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on Mentee Job Performance. This shows how important it is for organizations to work on improving job performance. The table also shows a beta of 0.224, an f-square of 0.116, a t-statistic of 2.138, and a p-value of 0.033 for the path from Mentee Commitment x Mentoring Experience to Mentee Job Performance. This means that the effect is moderate and statistically significant. It also indicates that the interplay between Mentee Commitment and Mentoring Experience significantly impacts Mentee Job Performance. On the other hand, the relationship between Mentoring Experience and Mentee Job Performance has a negative beta of -0.166, an f-square of 0.024, a t-statistic of 0.838, and a p-value of 0.402. The p-value is greater than 0.05, which means that Mentoring Experience does not have a statistically significant direct effect on Mentee Job Performance.

Table 9: Coefficient of Determination

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Mentee Job Performance	0.497	0.477

Table 9 displays the R-square values of Mentee Job Performance. The R-square value of 0.497 indicates that the model's predictors, namely Mentee Commitment and Mentoring Experience, account for about 49.7% of the variability in Mentee Job Performance. The measure of adjusted R-square of 0.477 considers the number of model predictors and suggests that 47.7% of the variability in the Job Performance of Mentees can be explained after the adjustment for model complexity. The statistics show medium explanatory power, and there are avenues for other job performance predictions.

Figure 2: Image of Structural Model
Figure 2 below shows how all the variables relate to each other.

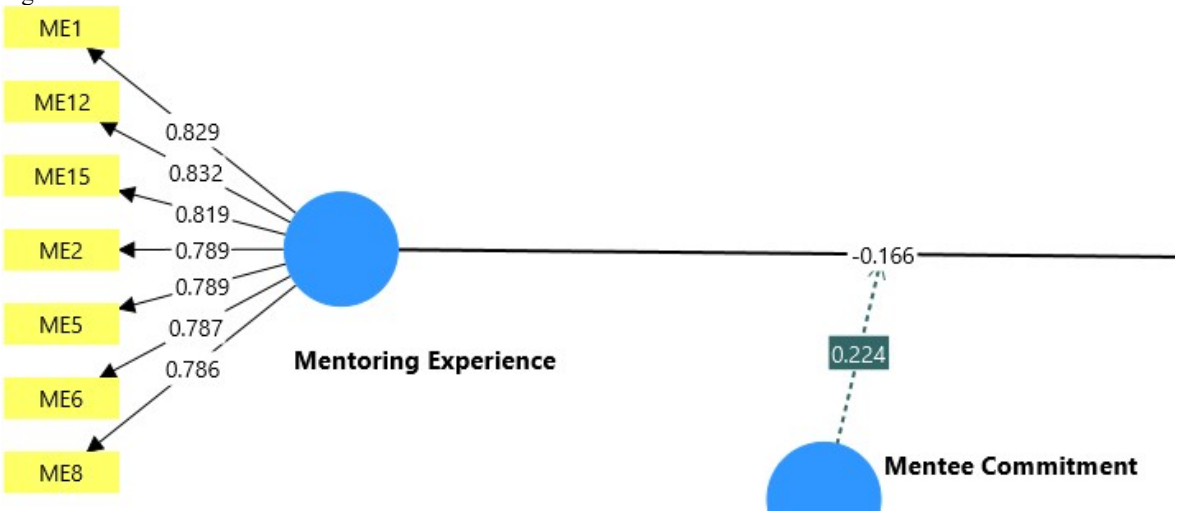
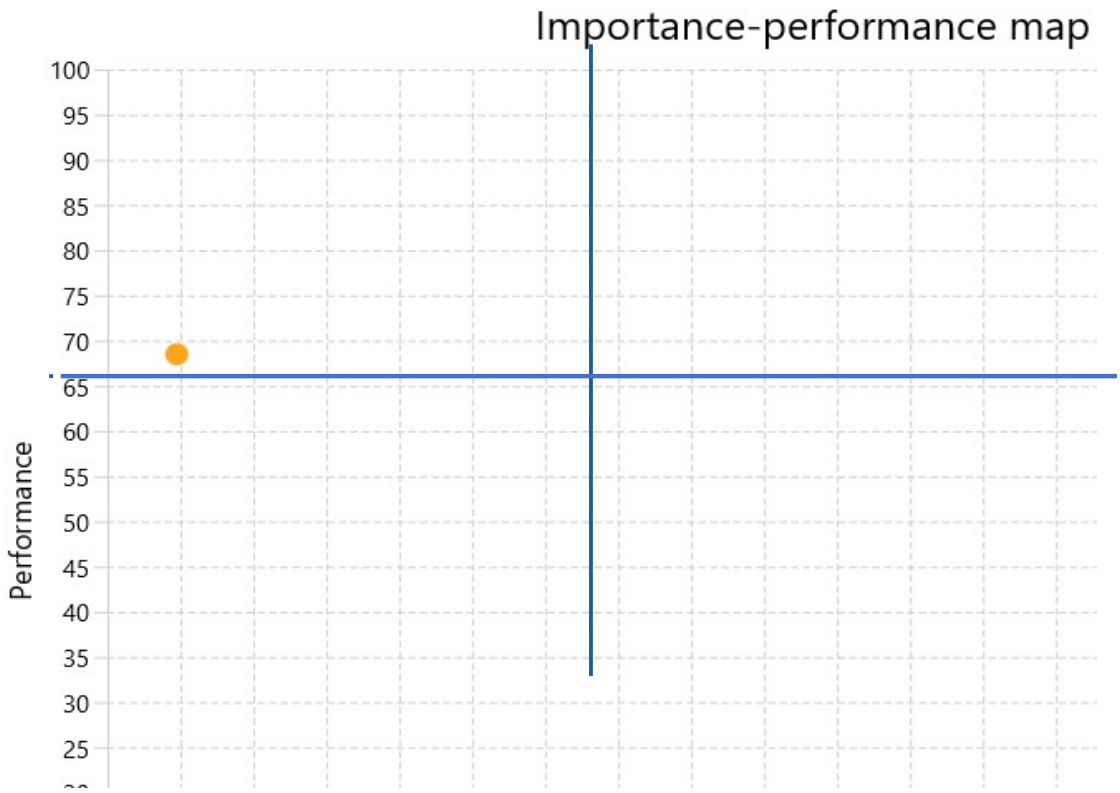


Figure 2 is a depiction of the structural model. It illustrates relationships between Mentee Job Performance, Mentee Commitment, Mentoring Experience, and their interaction, graphically displaying the direct and moderating effects between the constructs of the study. It provides a clear overview of the theoretical framework and how the variables interact within the context of the research model.

Post-Hoc Analysis

Tables 10a and 10b present the Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) results. The IPMA identifies constructs with high importance but low performance, which represent priority areas for intervention.

Table 10a: Importance-Performance Map Analysis



The Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) is a handy tool for analyzing how important and how good the items being researched are. The IPMA results are shown in Table 10. IPMA determines areas in need of most improvement by analyzing the importance of each variable and its performance level in predicting desired outcomes. The table provides the importance scores, which indicate how much contribution each construct is making to the model overall. The performance scores indicate how well these structures are currently performing. Mentee Commitment is an example of a construct that is very important but not very good at what it does. This shows areas that need work. Mentee Commitment is very important for improving Mentee Job Performance, but it needs to be better in order to be more effective. The Mentoring Experience is in the high relevance but low performance quadrant, so it also needs to be focused on strategically. It is vital for boosting work performance, but its current performance is lower than predicted, which means that this area has to be improved.

The IPMA lets one focus on both critical and poorly performing constructions, making sure that resources are used where they will have the most effect. Gender and age are examples of constructs that fall into the low performance and low priority quadrant. This means that they don't have much of an effect on the target outcomes and shouldn't get a lot of attention or resources in the current research design. In the meantime, the level of education is in the low performance but high importance quadrant. Education is a factor, but not a major one, in this case. Therefore, the best way to get meaningful results is to focus on improving constructs in the high relevance, low performance quadrant.

Table 10b: Importance-Performance Map Analysis

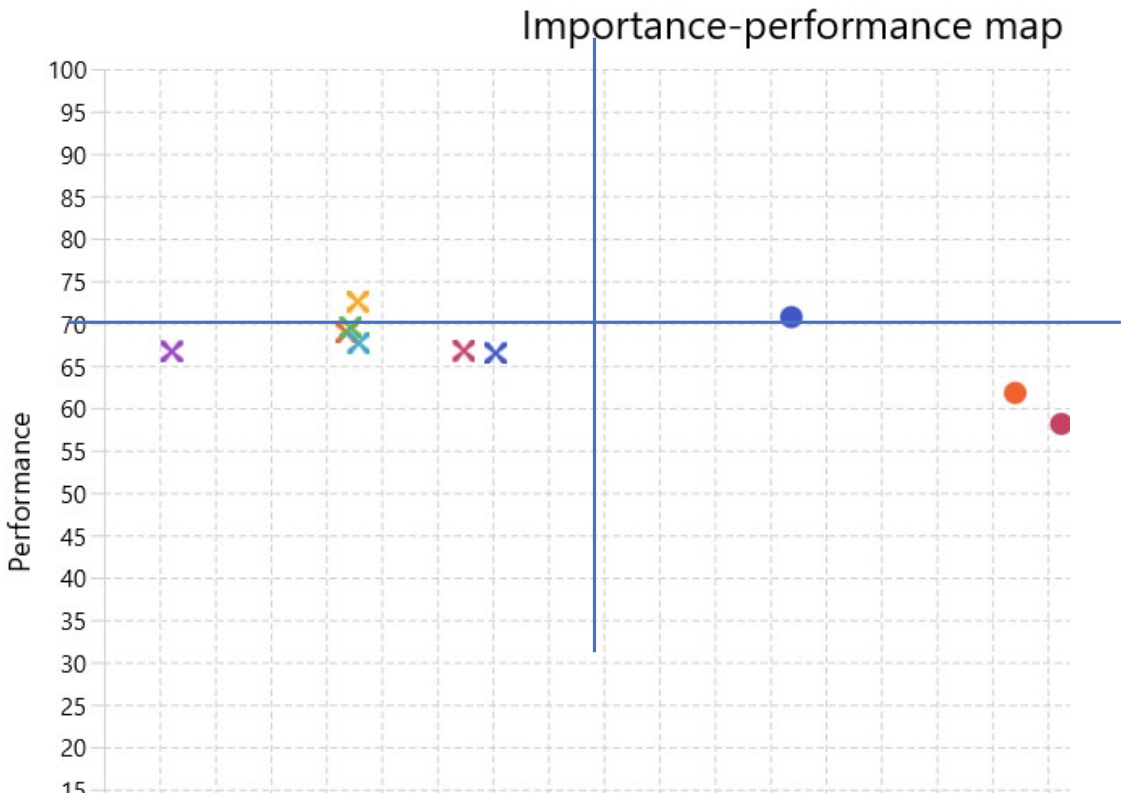


Table 11: Predictive Relevance and Power (PLS Predict MV Summary -Overview)

	Q²predict	PLS-SEM_RMSE	PLS-SEM_MAE	LM_RMSE	LM_MAE	IA_RMSE	IA_MAE
MJP12	0.221	0.413	0.324	0.464	0.312	0.468	0.403
MJP3	0.269	0.554	0.461	0.439	0.305	0.648	0.550
MJP4	0.475	0.394	0.317	0.311	0.236	0.544	0.459
MJP5	0.293	0.405	0.324	0.404	0.280	0.481	0.426
MJP8	0.218	0.468	0.420	0.319	0.222	0.529	0.517
MJP9	0.198	0.484	0.358	0.614	0.403	0.541	0.430

Table 11 highlights the PLS Predict MV Summary – Overview, indicating the predictive power of the model by comparing Q²predict values with various error metrics. The Q²predict values range from 0.198 to 0.475, showing moderate predictive relevance for the indicators of Mentee Job Performance (MJP). The RMSE and MAE results of the PLS-SEM, LM, and IA models reveal that they are all accurate in different ways. The PLS-SEM model is relatively better compared to the Linear Model (LM) and the Independent Assumption (IA) due to the fact that it has lower RMSE and MAE values. This shows that PLS-SEM is more predictive of MJP results.

Table 12: Test of Necessary Condition Analysis (NCA)

	NCA Original effect size	NCA Permutation p value	PLS Path Coefficient	PLS P-values
Mentee Commitment -> Mentee Job Performance	0.140	0.000	**0.733**	**0.000**
Mentoring Experience -> Mentee Job Performance	0.000	1.000	**-0.100**	**0.600**

Table 12 presents the Necessary Condition Analysis (NCA) which assesses whether a particular predictor or concept is a necessary condition for producing a specific outcome. In this study, the test of necessary condition

analysis was used to ascertain the link between Mentee Commitment, Mentoring Experience, and Mentee Job Performance. After assessing the relationship between Mentee Commitment and Mentee Job Performance, the initial effect size is 0.140, and the p-value from the NCA permutation test is 0.000. This suggests that Mentee Commitment is a necessary condition for improved Mentee Job Performance. Large p-value suggests that the relationship is tight, and Mentee Commitment is very importantly contributing to increasing Mentee Job Performance. Highly positive PLS path coefficient of 0.733 further testifies to the same. Once again, the p-value of 0.000 attests to the fact that Mentee Commitment is an important contributor to Mentee Job Performance. Recent research by Janssen et al. (2020) indicates that employee commitment boosts job performance through higher engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction. Further similar research by Muñoz et al. (2021) indicated that mentorship commitment significantly enhanced job performance and career development.

Conversely, the correlation between Mentoring Experience and Mentee Job Performance has a contrasting finding. The effect size is initially 0.000, and the p-value of the NCA permutation test is 1.000, which is not significant. This suggests that Mentoring Experience is not a necessary condition for Mentee Job Performance, because the permutation test fails to support the condition's need. The PLS path coefficient of -0.100, with a p-value of 0.600, further shows the lack of a meaningful link between Mentoring Experience and Mentee Job Performance. These findings support previous studies, such as Chowdhury and Rahman (2021), which found that while mentoring experience may positively influence performance, it is not necessarily directly connected with improved employment outcomes. In a similar study, Reddy and Reddy (2022) underlined that mentoring alone is not sufficient to guarantee performance improvements. This suggests that other elements, such as mentee commitment, motivation and organizational culture, play a significant role.

4.0 Discussion

This section offers critical interpretation and reflection on the data produced with the SmartPLS for the analysis, with special reference to key findings including indicator reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity and structural findings. Commentary brings the findings into alignment with the broader literature on the relationship between the mentoring-work performance, with theoretical as well as with practical implications, with an indication for future areas for research. The outer loadings for all constructs in the measurement model met the threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2021), indicating that the items accurately measured their respective constructions. Specifically, the mentee commitment construct exhibited loadings ranging from 0.701 to 0.864. This demonstrates good dependability across the markers. It also aligns with the criterion set by Hair et al. (2021) who suggest outer loadings above 0.7 for the optimal best construct validity. The results show that the measuring model is robust and that the constructs are well represented by the appropriate items.

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all dimensions, mentee job performance (0.688), mentee commitment (0.632) and mentoring experience (0.647), above the minimum requirement of 0.50, as indicated by Hair et al. (2021). This suggests that the constructs retain an appropriate level of the variance in their indicators, thus showing high convergent validity. Additionally, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for each construct (varying from 0.890 to 0.930) surpassed the minimum required value of 0.70, further validating the internal consistency of the constructs (Henseler et al., 2009). The results again support the structural validity of the measuring model along with the data used for the aim of hypotheses verification.

The model's discriminant validity was tested through the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, with values below the threshold 0.85, as suggested by Henseler et al. (2009). In particular, the HTMT values between mentoring experience and mentee commitment (0.799) indicated that even though these constructs are related, they differ from each other. This is an important conclusion as it reveals that the constructs in the model are nicely separated so that legitimate comparison between the constructs is permitted. The findings indicate that the concepts in the model are clear and distinctive from each other, thereby providing evidence for the validity for the hypothesized interlinkages. The R-squared for the model, 0.497, indicates that the predictors in the variables of the mentoring experiences as well as the mentee commitment account for about 49.7% of the variability in the mentee job performance. This reflects a medium explanatory power, with values greater than 0.33 accepted in social sciences studies (Hair et al., 2021). The R^2 value alludes to the model's capacity to capture a considerable percentage of the variance in work performance, however there is still space for improvement in explaining job performance outcomes.

In terms of f^2, the values ranged from 0.024 to 0.531, which demonstrates that both mentoring experiences and mentee have a moderate to high effect on mentee work performance. The Q^2 values ranging from 0.198 to 0.475 further validate the model's predictive significance, since values over 0.02 show a moderate predictive potential for the indicators of mentee work performance (Hair et al., 2021). The path coefficient from mentoring

experience to job performance was not statistically significant (β = -0.166, p = 0.402), demonstrating that mentoring experiences alone did not directly affect job performance. This research undermines the premise that mentoring, by itself, can boost work performance. It postulates that the outcomes of the mentoring experiences would not necessarily lead to job performance improvements unless the mentee is actively engaged. However, the interaction term between the commitment of the mentee and the experience of the mentors had an unequivocal positive path coefficient value of 0.224 (p = 0.033), supporting the postulation that the commitment of the mentee moderates the association between the influence of the mentoring experiences on job performance. This research underscores the imperative requirement for the involvement and psychological investment of the mentee in realizing the optimal gains for the mentoring alliances.

The analysis highlights the critical mediating function of mentee in connecting mentoring experiences with job performance. In the absence of the direct impact between job performance and mentoring, the analysis indicates that mentoring may not sufficient on its own to enhance early-career administrators' performance at UCC. Mentee commitment, on the other hand, significantly dictates whether or not mentoring results in performance enhancement. This highlights the importance of fostering meaningful involvement and psychological investment by mentees, particularly in higher education institutions, where administrators encounter complex leadership and decisional problems. Mentee commitment, as a moderator, strengthens the link between mentoring experiences and work success. This means that when mentees are actively involved and invested in the mentoring process, they are more likely to use the knowledge received from their mentors and improve their work habits, which in turn boosts their job performance. This finding corresponds with other researches that emphasize the relevance of mentee commitment in mentoring outcomes (Gisbert-Trejo et al., 2020; Kumari et al., 2022).

The study's findings correlate with past research on mentoring in higher education, such as Gisbert-Trejo et al. (2020) and Kumari et al. (2022), which revealed that mentee significantly boosts job performance. These studies underline the necessity of mentee engagement in successful mentoring. However, the study diverges from others like Zarghoni & Rasool (2021), which demonstrated a direct beneficial association between mentorship and job success. The disparity may be explained by the individual conditions of UCC, for which early-career administrator programmes might not have the organization or regularity characteristic of the academic staff mentorship. The results suggest that the quality and organization of the experiences of mentoring determine how much they improve job performance.

The report advises that UCC should focus on fostering mentee commitment in its mentoring programmes. Institutions should design activities that foster active mentee engagement and ownership of their professional advancement. This includes defining clear goals, offering regular feedback, and providing support in applying knowledge. Additionally, UCC should integrate both official and informal mentoring frameworks to offer comprehensive support, with informal mentoring providing flexible, context-driven guidance. These efforts will better equip mentees, boost their job performance, and help them handle difficult administrative roles.

5.0 Conclusion and Implications

The study emphasizes that mentee commitment is key for translating mentoring experiences into enhanced job performance among early-career administrators at UCC. While mentoring alone did not directly influence performance, its relationship with mentee greatly enhanced administrative effectiveness. This highlights the need of active psychological investment and engagement from mentees. At UCC, establishing a culture of full participation in mentoring can improve leadership capacity, facilitate skill development, and link individual growth with institutional goals, supporting the university's strategic priority of cultivating effective administrative leadership.

Practically, these findings underline the importance for UCC to create mentoring programmes that encourage mentee engagement and active participation. Early career administrators should be helped to create personal and professional goals, participate in structured developing activities, and receive constant feedback that addresses both career progression and psychosocial growth. Flexibility within these programmes is vital to address individual requirements while emphasizing accountability and ownership of one's progress. Early collaborative planning between mentors and mentees regarding objectives, timelines, and methods of involvement ensures that mentoring relationships are meaningful and productive. By executing an applied policy in this fashion, UCC will be better positioned to strengthen the early-career administrators' decision-making abilities, leadership potential and performance management so that an organizational climate where excellent performance is routinely cultivated and prized will result.

From a policy perspective, the paper emphasizes the importance of including mentee commitment explicitly within institutionalized structures for mentoring. Policies need to codify the practice of mentoring, provide tools for tracking engagement, and recognize mentee input toward professional growth. University leaders need to budget for mentor training, issue explicit guidelines for the activities of mentoring, and positively cultivate an environment where participation is rewarded. Integrating commitment as a policy fundamental ensures that not only is the procedural requirement for mentoring complied with but also that it becomes an administrative strategic tool for achievement. By implementing regulations that encourage the participation of mentees, UCC will potentially increase the professional development, retention and overall performance of early-career administrators so that the potential for mentoring results in actual institutional benefits.

It extends past theoretical models of mentoring by the inclusion of the moderating effect of mentee investment, with potential for post-secondary education. Traditional frameworks like Kram's mentoring model and social exchange theory focus on mentor-driven assistance, while this research stresses the role of mentee engagement in determining mentoring outcomes. Incorporating motivational and behavioural components into mentoring theories helps understanding, especially in African institutions where mentoring is generally informal. The results indicate the extension of theoretical models to combine the proactive involvement by mentees, with further studies required on the mutual connection between institutional culture, context, and person variables in the effectiveness of mentoring.

The implications of these results extend across many stakeholders, including the university leadership, HR offices, advisors, and policymakers, all the way to the basis that active involvement by the mentee determines the efficacy of the outcome for mentoring initiatives. Organizations attempting administrative performance improvement need to understand that the return on the potential for mentoring is highest when the mentees themselves commit to the process. Engagement strategies increase not just leadership skills and job satisfaction but operational performance capability by administrative teams. For early-career administrators, these insights provide a roadmap for leveraging mentoring experiences to advance their professional trajectory, while for the institution, they highlight a mechanism to cultivate capable, motivated, and high-performing administrative staff who can contribute meaningfully to UCC's strategic objectives and long-term institutional excellence.

5.1 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Investigations

One weakness of this study is its concentration on early-career administrators at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other institutions or more seasoned staff. Additionally, the study was conducted within a single institution, meaning the results may not apply to institutions with diverse organizational structures or circumstances. Future research should explore the impact of mentoring experience, mentee commitment, and mentee work efficiency in different institutions or sectors. Longitudinal studies could also evaluate the long-term effects of these characteristics on job performance as early-career administrators develop in their careers.

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