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Lecturer-Student Mentorship and Engagement in Student's Organisational Citizenship Behaviour among University Students: Mediating Role of Supportive Institutional Policies

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Abstract

This research explores the relationship between lecturer-student mentorship and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), examining the potential mediating impact of supportive institutional policies on this relationship. The study evaluates three distinct dimensions of lecturer-student mentorship, namely academic mentorship, career mentorship, and personal development mentorship. We adopted a cross-sectional design and purposively selected 331 undergraduate students [males =53.2 %, females = 46.8 %; Age (mean) = 29 years] in Ghana to respond to our survey. The face-to-face survey consisted of demographic information and standardised scales: Student Mentorship Scale, Students' OCB Scale, and Supportive Institutional Policies Questionnaire. The findings indicate a positive influence of each form of lecturer-student mentorship (academic, career, and personal development) on students' OCB. Using mediation modelling through the JASP software, supportive institutional policies partially mediated the relationship between all the dimensions of lecturer-student mentorship and students' OCB. These results suggest that institutions should recognise the importance of creating policies that support and reinforce positive mentoring relationships to enhance students' OCB. The findings from the study serve as a pioneering effort to explore the dimensions of student mentorship within the

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specific context of Ghana. Higher educational institutions should consider developing policies that encourage mentorship programmes, allocate resources for mentoring activities, and establish a conducive environment for mentorship to flourish.

Keywords: Ghana, lecturer-student mentorship, mediation analysis, organisational citizenship behaviour, supportive institutional policies, university students.

1. Introduction

Professors or lecturers have three fundamental duties within academia, encompassing research, teaching, and service (Hawkins et al., 2014). While teaching and research roles are often clearly defined, the sphere of service within the academic community can manifest in many ways (Reymert, Thune, 2023). One critical component of service that significantly contributes to the growth and development of the academic community is the mentorship of students (Hamann, 2019). Lecturer-student mentorship (LSM) is an integral component of the service aspect of a lecturer's role (Gill et al., 2018). It embodies the nurturing and cultivation of intellectual and professional growth within the student body (Lin et al., 2021). Through this service, professors or lecturers in higher educational institutions extend their commitment beyond imparting knowledge and conducting research towards the guidance and support of individual students in their academic pursuits and personal aspirations (Hamann, 2019). By assuming the role of mentors, they provide a valuable support system that fosters a conducive environment for students to flourish intellectually, emotionally, and professionally (Reymert, Thune, 2023). Lecturers who deliver the mentorship role assume the responsibilities of advisors, motivators, and role models, imparting wisdom, experience, and practical insights to students navigating the complexities of their academic journey (Ghosh, Reio, 2013). This service is instrumental in facilitating students' academic progress and achievement and nurturing their personal growth, self-confidence, and critical thinking abilities (Bogler, Somech, 2023).

The LSM mentorship assumes various forms, each contributing uniquely to the comprehensive development of students (Reymert, Thune, 2023; Tonidandel et al., 2007). These are academic mentorship, career mentorship, and personal development mentorship. Academic mentorship (AM) helps students set educational goals, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and navigate challenges related to coursework, exams, and research (Sozio et al., 2017). Career mentorship (CM) aims to assist students in developing a clear understanding of their professional aspirations and career paths (Gill et al., 2018). Personal development mentorship (PDM) supports students in setting and achieving personal goals, promoting a healthy work-life balance, and cultivating habits that contribute to overall well-being and fulfilment (Lin et al., 2021).

Despite recognising the multifaceted impact of LSM on students' lives, extensive research on its direct correlation with students' organisational citizenship behaviour (SOCB) remains limited (Blondheim, Somech, 2019). The role of students as responsible citizens is intricately entwined within the concept of LSM. Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) refers to the discretionary individual behaviour that promotes the effective functioning of an organisation but is not formally recognised (Garcia, 2023). The concept of SOCB denotes the positive behaviours exhibited by students within an educational institution that contribute to the overall functioning and well-being of the academic community (Asad et al., 2019). These behaviours go beyond the formal requirements of coursework and academic performance and include actions that contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment (Somech, Ohayon, 2020).

Remarkably, while the literature has explored the dynamic interplay between LSM and student behaviour, it has primarily approached mentorship as a composite construct rather than discerning the nuanced impact of its distinct forms (Sozio et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2014). Amidst this research gap, it becomes imperative to examine the distinctive influences of the triad of LSM forms on SOCB. Moreover, supportive institutional policies (SIP), which are the bedrock for fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment, assume a critical position. A cursory review shows no recent study has assessed supportive institutional policies' mediating role in the relationship between LSM and SOCB. According to Cao et al. (2022), SIP, which refers to the guidelines, regulations, and practices implemented within an organisation or institution to foster a positive and inclusive environment that promotes the well-being, growth, and success of its members, are designed to provide a framework that supports individuals, groups, or communities in achieving their goals and objectives (Wang et al., 2014). When institutions actively promote a culture of appreciation for the lecturer's mentoring behaviour, students are motivated to participate more

actively in OCB (Asad et al., 2019). Based on this, the study considers SIP to be a mediating factor in the relationship between LSM and SOCB.

2. Literature review
2.1. Theoretical Review
The role of SIP as a mediator in the relationship between LSM and SOCB can be explained through the tenets of the Social Exchange Theory (SET; Blau, 1959). The SET emphasises social relationships as exchanges of valued resources, wherein individuals seek to maximise their rewards and minimise costs. The SET suggests that SIP act as a framework that structures social exchanges within an educational institution. These policies can formalise expectations, clarify roles, and provide a basis for evaluating performance. SIP may also address recognition, rewards, and professional development opportunities, influencing students' motivations to exhibit positive behaviours like OCB (Huart et al., 2023). According to the SET, individuals feel obliged to reciprocate the positive treatment they receive (Scerri et al., 2023). SIPs that foster a positive environment and acknowledge OCB create a sense of obligation for students to reciprocate by continuing to exhibit such OCB.

2.2. Lecturer-Student Mentorship
Mentorship represents a developmental relationship where a mentor, possessing greater knowledge or experience, guides and supports a mentee, aiming to foster personal and professional growth (Hawkins et al., 2014). The LSM programmes can be grouped into three: academic, career, and professional development (Reymert, Thune, 2023; Tonidandel et al., 2007). Firstly, academic mentorship (AM) assumes a pivotal role in fostering students' sense of belonging and support within the academic sphere, positively influencing their inclination to contribute to the overall well-being of the educational community (Tonidandel et al., 2007). Furthermore, AM focuses on refining study skills, time management, effective learning strategies, and subject-specific knowledge, bolsters students' academic endeavours, and fosters a culture of continuous intellectual development (Bogler, Somech, 2023). Thus, AM is designed to support students in their educational endeavours, primarily focusing on enhancing their academic performance and learning experience (Ghosh, Reio, 2013).

Secondly, career mentorship (CM) aids students in delineating their professional aspirations and trajectories, equipping them with insights into diverse industries, job roles, and career pathways, thus enabling informed decision-making and cultivating a strong professional identity and commitment to their future careers (Hawkins et al., 2014). Thirdly, personal development mentorship (PDM) focuses on guiding and supporting student's growth, self-improvement, and self-awareness (Reymert, Thune, 2023). This type of mentorship typically involves helping students develop specific skills, enhance their strengths, and address areas for improvement. Also, it delves into the holistic well-being of students, surpassing the confines of academics and professions (Xu et al., 2014).

2.3. SOCB
The OCB refers to discretionary individual behaviour that promotes the effective functioning of an organisation but is not formally recognised or rewarded (Blondheim, Somech, 2019). The concept of SOCB often refers to positive behaviours exhibited by students within an educational institution that contribute to the overall functioning and well-being of the academic community (Garcia, 2023). These behaviours go beyond the formal requirements of coursework and academic performance and include actions that contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment (Blondheim, Somech, 2019). Some examples of SOCB may consist of helping peers with academic tasks, volunteering for school events or activities, demonstrating responsible and ethical conduct, and contributing to school initiatives (Asad et al., 2019). By engaging in these forms of OCB, students contribute to the educational institution's overall positive atmosphere and cultivate essential skills and values for personal and professional development. Encouraging and recognising SOCB can foster a culture of active citizenship, responsibility, and community engagement, nurturing well-rounded individuals who are academically successful, socially responsible, and empathetic members of society (Blondheim, Somech, 2019).

2.4. Supportive Institutional Policies
The SIP refers to the set of guidelines, regulations, and practices implemented within an organisation or institution to create an environment that fosters its members' well-being, growth, and success (Xu et al., 2014). These policies provide a framework that supports individuals, groups,

or communities in achieving their goals and objectives while promoting a culture of inclusivity, fairness, and support (Cao et al., 2022). Institutional policies are supportive when they support a healthy balance between work and personal life, outline the ethical standards and expected conduct within the institution, promote integrity, accountability, and a respectful work environment, and ensure equal opportunities and treatment for individuals from different backgrounds (Chen et al., 2017). By establishing SIP, organisations can create a conducive and nurturing environment that fosters growth, development, and overall well-being (Cao et al., 2022). These policies contribute to the success of individuals within the institution and promote a positive and inclusive culture that values diversity, encourages collaboration, and supports the achievement of collective and individual goals (Ekpoh, Ukot, 2019).

2.5. The relationship between LSM and SOCB

The relationship between LSM and extra-role activities, such as OCB, remains a subject of growing interest and research (Lin et al., 2021). While studies have indicated a positive association between mentorship and various positive outcomes, the specific impact of LSM on SOCB has garnered less attention. However, SOCB has potential implications for academic and organisational settings (Gill et al., 2018). The LSM is believed to influence SOCB in several ways. First, mentorship often fosters increased engagement and commitment among students, encouraging them to participate actively in academic and extracurricular activities (Garcia, 2023). Second, effective mentorship can serve as a source of positive role modelling for students, encouraging them to exhibit behaviours that benefit the academic community beyond the formal requirements of their coursework (Lin et al., 2021). Third, supportive mentorship relationships can enhance students' motivation to contribute positively to their academic environment, fostering a sense of responsibility and ownership toward the collective welfare of the institution (Somech, Ohayon, 2020). When students feel supported in their academic pursuits, they may be more inclined to engage in helping behaviours towards peers, lecturers, and the institution, thus promoting OCB (Chen et al., 2017).

Moreover, students who gain guidance on navigating their careers and developing essential skills may demonstrate proactive behaviours and a willingness to contribute beyond their formal job roles, positively impacting OCB in their future workplace (Bogler, Somech, 2023). Personal development mentoring can enhance self-awareness. PDM also helps students understand their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement (Chang, Uen, 2022). This awareness can encourage them to actively contribute to the organisation's goals beyond their defined roles. Mentoring that aims at personal development often focuses on enhancing essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership (Garcia, 2023). Students with these skills are more likely to engage in cooperative behaviours and assist others within the organisation (Ghosh et al., 2012). Thus, we hypothesised that all the dimensions of LSM (AM, CM, and PDM) will positively predict SOCB.

2.6. Mediating role of supportive institutional policies

The crucial role SIP plays in mediating the relationship between LSM and SOCB is worth exploring in this study. According to the SET, when students perceive that the institution values their contributions and well-being, it fosters trust and commitment within the student body (Scerri et al., 2020). As per the SET, trust is an essential component of any exchange relationship, and when students trust that the institution will support and recognise their efforts, they are more likely to engage in SOCB (Huart et al., 2023). The SET emphasises the interdependence between individuals in a relationship. Besides, SIPs prioritising students' well-being and development underscore the idea of mutual dependence, fostering an environment where students feel valued and integral to the institution's success, which contributes to students' engagement in SOCB (Scerri et al., 2020). Moreover, policies influence the expectations, norms, and motivations contributing to SOCB within the academic context.

Furthermore, institutional policies that recognise and reward instances of SOCB can amplify the impact of LSM on students' behaviour (Zhao et al., 2022). Positive policies may provide a supportive framework that encourages effective mentorship, creating an environment where students feel valued, supported, and motivated to engage in OCB. On the other hand, if institutional policies are not supportive or are inconsistent with the goals of mentorship, they may hinder the positive impact of mentorship on SOCB (Ghosh et al., 2012). Thus, SIPs prioritise creating a positive and inclusive learning environment to foster a sense of belonging among students. When students feel valued and supported within the institution, the mentorship provided

by lecturers becomes more impactful in encouraging OCB, as students are more likely to reciprocate the positive environment through their actions (Ekpoh, Ukot, 2019). We again hypothesised that SIP will mediate the connection between the dimensions of AM and SOCB.

3. Methodology
3.1. Research approach, participants and procedure

A quantitative survey approach utilising a cross-sectional framework was chosen for this study primarily due to its suitability for gathering data from a diverse sample at a particular point in time (Addai et al., 2023). This research design was carefully selected based on its ability to infer the relationship between various variables within the given context, enabling the researchers to draw insights from a large and diverse dataset. The targeted population comprised undergraduate students enrolled at a Ghanaian university with a student body totalling fewer than 10,000 individuals. The selection of this population was particularly relevant given the competitive nature of universities in Ghana. Thus, a robust mentoring programme can provide students with essential insights and networking prospects within their respective fields. When prospective students observe a university's strong history of facilitating graduates' career success through effective mentorship, they are more inclined to be drawn to the institution.

Table 1. Respondents demographic characteristics (n = 331)

Variable	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Sex		
male	176	53.2
Female	155	46.8
Age		
≤ 20 years	72	21.8
21 – 30 years	165	49.8
≥ 31 years	94	28.4
Level of study		
Level 100	78	23.6
Level 200	77	23.3
Level 300	95	28.7
Level 400	81	24.4
Educational Session		
Business	121	36.6
Engineering	106	32.0
Information Technology	104	31.4

The researchers employed purposive sampling to target 400 participants, a method aligned with the predefined inclusion criteria of selecting readily available individuals who met our inclusion characteristics (Sarfo et al., 2022). Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 331 were returned, resulting in a robust response rate of 82.8%. Among the participants, the majority, accounting for 53.2 %, were identified as males, with a mean age of 29 years old. The participants constituted a diverse group of undergraduate students ranging from level 100 to 400, enrolled in various academic programmes such as business, engineering, and information technology (refer to Table 1).

To improve the response rate, the researchers opted for face-to-face data collection. During these encounters, the researchers personally approached potential respondents, obtained their informed consent, and provided them with the questionnaires. Those who had the time readily completed the questionnaires on the spot. The questionnaires were left in their possession for those unable to respond immediately, and the researchers made subsequent visits the following day to retrieve the completed questionnaires. The data collection process spanned approximately two weeks.

3.3. Measures

The study's participants responded to a questionnaire comprising a biodata section (sex, age, level of study, and educational session) and three validated scales. All the scales were responded to on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The three scales were as follows:

Student Mentorship Scale (LSMS) (Sozio et al., 2017): It is a 10-item scale designed to assess the effectiveness of student mentorship programmes and the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91. The scale evaluates the three dimensions of mentorship: academic, career, and personal development. An example item from the LSMS is "*My lecturer provides valuable guidance and support in my academic pursuits.*"

Students' OCB Scale (SOCBS) (Desselle, Semsick, 2016): It is a 12-item measure that evaluates the extent to which students engage in behaviours contributing to the overall functioning and effectiveness of the academic environment, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. A sample item from the SOCBS is "*I willingly assist my classmates when they encounter academic challenges.*"

Supportive Institutional Policies Questionnaires (SIPQ) (Cao et al., 2022): It is a 9-item scale developed to evaluate the effectiveness and perception of various supportive policies within an institution. These policies encompass areas related to academic support, diversity, inclusivity, and mentorship activities. The scale has a Cronbach alpha of 0.79. A sample item from the SIPQ is "*I feel that the institution provides adequate academic resources and support services for students.*"

3.4. Analysis

Following data acquisition through questionnaire administration, statistical analysis was conducted using the JASP software [Version 0.17.2.1] (JASP Team, 2023), employing Bootstrap resampling with 5,000 replications. To ensure model robustness, we used ML and DWLS (robust options) estimator and lavaan syntax, while full information maximum likelihood (FIML) was employed to address missing values in the dataset. The JASP (JASP Team, 2023) was also used to assess reliability, generate descriptive statistics, conduct correlation analyses, and execute confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

The mediation model syntax for the analysis is as follows:

```
# dependent regression
SOCB ~ b11*Policies + c11*Academic + c12*Career + c13*Personal
# mediator regression
Policies ~ a11*Academic + a12*Career + a13*Personal
# effect decomposition
# y1 ~ x1
ind_x1_m1_y1 := a11*b11
ind_x1_y1 := ind_x1_m1_y1
tot_x1_y1 := ind_x1_y1 + c11

# y1 ~ x2
ind_x2_m1_y1 := a12*b11
ind_x2_y1 := ind_x2_m1_y1
tot_x2_y1 := ind_x2_y1 + c12
# y1 ~ x3
ind_x3_m1_y1 := a13*b11
ind_x3_y1 := ind_x3_m1_y1
tot_x3_y1 := ind_x3_y1 + c13
```

3.5. Factor analysis

The CFA was employed to assess the discriminative validity of LSM, SIP, and SOCB. The results of this analysis are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of the variables

Model		χ^2	Df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	TLI	GFI	CFI
(1)	Three-factor model	4177.86	434	9.62	0.16	0.37	0.90	0.42

(a)	LSM and SIP	858.17	152	5.64	0.12	0.60	0.94	0.64
(b)	LSM and SOCB	3378.44	209	16.16	0.21	0.31	0.86	0.37
(c)	SIP and SOCB	3140.87	189	16.61	0.21	0.32	0.86	0.39
(2)	Single factor model	4288.37	405	10.58	0.17	0.34	0.84	0.39

Notes: RMSEA, root-mean-square error of approximation; TLI, Tucker-Lewis statistics; GFI, goodness-of-fit index; CFI, comparative-fit index. Supportive institutional policies (SIP), academic mentorship (AM), career mentorship (CM), personal development mentorship (PDM) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

From Table 2, the proposed three-factor model consisting of LSM, SIP, and SOCB demonstrated a strong agreement with the dataset ($\chi 2/df$ = 9.62, RMSEA = 0.16, TLI = 0.37, GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.42, $p < 0.01$). These findings validate the robust fit of the proposed model. Additionally, each item exhibited significant loadings on their respective constructs, confirming the convergence of validity within these constructs. We conducted a single-factor assessment to evaluate the potential impact of common method variance. The results revealed an inadequate fit for the single-factor model ($\chi 2/df$ =10.58, RMSEA = 0.17, TLI = 0.34, GFI = 0.84, CFI = 0.39). This emphasises the distinct nature of the constructs from one another, indicating their strong discriminant validity.

3.6. Analysis of descriptive statistics and correlations

From Table 3, the analysis revealed that AM exhibited a strong positive correlation with CM ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$), PDM ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$), SIP ($r = 0.40$, $p < 0.01$), and SOCB ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$). CM also indicated a significant positive correlation with PDM ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), SIP ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$), and SOCB ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, PDM was observed to be significantly correlated with SIP ($r = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$) and SOCB ($r = 0.53$, $p < 0.01$). Lastly, SIP positively correlated with SOCB ($r = 0.54$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix (N = 331)

	Measures	Mean	SD	Correlations				
				1	2	3	4	5
1	AM	11.65	2.91	1				
2	CM	9.60	2.59	.55**	1			
3	PDM	9.00	2.19	.52**	.50**	1		
4	SIP	29.01	6.00	.40**	.42**	.36**	1	
5	SOCB	38.81	8.58	.48**	.48**	.53**	.54**	1

Notes: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; Supportive institutional policies (SIP), academic mentorship (AM), career mentorship (CM), personal development mentorship (PDM) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

4. Results

The results indicate direct, indirect and total effects from the Hypotheses tests using the mediation analysis. The hypotheses were analysed using JASP and summarised using tables. To evaluate the impact of LSM components (AM, CM, and PDM) on SOCB (refer to Table 4), the analysis indicated that AM significantly predicted SOCB (direct effect b= 0.047, p= 0.009). Additionally, CA significantly predicted SOCB (direct effect b = 0.049, p= 0.015). Furthermore, PDM significantly predicted SOCB (direct effect b = 0.126, $p < 0.001$). These findings lend support to Hypothesis 1.

Table 4. Summary of the direct effect of the components of mentorship on SOCB (N = 331)

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95 % Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
AM → SOCB	0.047	0.018	2.594	0.009	0.003	0.091
CA → SOCB	0.049	0.020	2.437	0.015	0.005	0.097
PDM → SOCB	0.126	0.023	5.497	< .001	0.062	0.183

Notes: Supportive institutional policies (SIP), academic mentorship (AM), personal development mentorship (PDM), career mentorship (CA) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)

Evaluating the indirect impact of AM on SOCB through SIP, the introduction of SIP into the model resulted is noteworthy in the effects of AM (indirect effect b= 0.022, p= 0.004), CA (indirect effect b= 0.032, p < .001), and PDM (indirect effect b= 0.022, p= 0.023) on SOCB. This role suggests a partial mediating effect of the components of LSM on SOCB. See Table 5 for details.

Table 5. Indirect effect of mentorship components and SIP on SOCB (N = 331)

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95 % Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
AM → SIP → SOCB	0.022	0.008	2.865	0.004	0.007	0.042
CA → SIP → SOCB	0.032	0.009	3.605	< .001	0.015	0.056
PDM → SIP → SOCB	0.022	0.009	2.273	0.023	0.002	0.047

Notes: Supportive institutional policies (SIP), academic mentorship (AM), personal development mentorship (PDM), career mentorship (CA) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

In other words, SIP indeed mediates the relationship between AM, CA, and PDM on SOCB, indicating a partial mediation role of SIP in the relationship between the components of LSM and SOCB. This finding aligns with the second hypothesis.

Table 6. Total effect of the component of LSM on SOCB (N = 331)

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95 % Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
AM → SOCB	0.069	0.019	3.599	< .001	0.019	0.112
CA → SOCB	0.082	0.021	3.859	< .001	0.035	0.137
PDM → SOCB	0.147	0.024	6.037	< .001	0.083	0.212

Notes: Academic mentorship (AM), personal development mentorship (PDM), career mentorship (CA) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

From the path coefficients, it was clear that SIP as a construct influenced SOCB, with a direct effect b = 0.335, p < .001. Moreover, according to the coefficients of determination (R^2), the SIP explained 23.8 % of SOCB (medium effect) (Cohen, 1992).

Table 7. Path coefficients of the components of mentorship and SIP on SOCB (N = 331)

			Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95 % Confidence Interval	
							Lower	Upper
SIP	→	SOCB	0.335	0.046	7.235	< .001	0.214	0.452
AM	→	SOCB	0.047	0.018	2.594	0.009	0.003	0.091
CA	→	SOCB	0.049	0.020	2.437	0.015	0.005	0.097
PDM	→	SOCB	0.126	0.023	5.497	< .001	0.062	0.183
AM	→	SIP	0.066	0.021	3.120	0.002	0.017	0.116
CA	→	SIP	0.097	0.023	4.158	< .001	0.050	0.148
PDM	→	SIP	0.064	0.027	2.394	0.017	0.005	0.129

Notes: Supportive institutional policies (SIP), academic mentorship (AM), personal development mentorship (PDM), career mentorship (CA) and students' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

The path estimates in Table 7 are depicted in Figure 1.

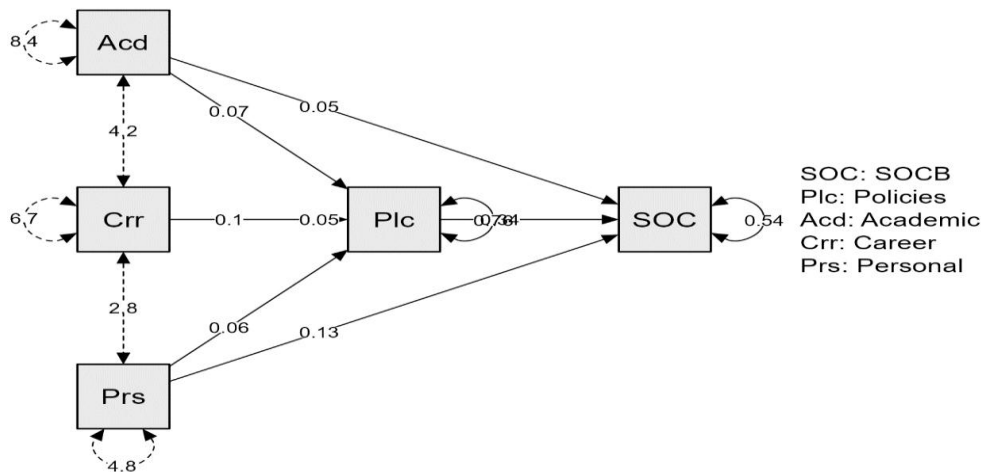**Fig. 1.** Path plot of the mediating effect

5. Discussion

The findings indicated a significantly positive influence of the components of LSM on SOCB. This means that mentorship programmes provided by the lecturers to the students benefit the student's willingness to go beyond their prescribed roles and contribute positively to the institution. The findings agree with the studies that illustrated a positive impact between the components of LSM and SOCB (Chang, Uen, 2022; Ghosh et al., 2012). Student mentorship programmes facilitate OCB by providing students access to experienced mentors who serve as role models, guiding them in professional norms, ethical conduct, and responsible behaviour within the academic community. By instilling these values, mentorship programmes empower students to actively contribute to the academic community, fostering a sense of responsibility and engagement crucial to OCB development.

Within the academic realm, LSM assumes a specialised form, with educators taking the role of mentors, imparting knowledge and expertise to enhance students' academic performance, personal development, and career progression (Wang et al., 2014). LSM fosters robust connections between lecturers and students, nurturing an environment of open dialogue, constructive feedback, and intellectual exchange, thus cultivating a vibrant learning community grounded in mutual respect and engagement (Hamann, 2019; Tonidandel et al., 2007). The overarching objective of mentorship is to facilitate the holistic development of the mentee, aiding them in their journey of growth, learning, and goal attainment (Ekpoh, Ukot, 2019). Mentorship can transpire across various domains, including education, career development, personal growth, and social integration, emphasising its multifaceted impact on individuals' lives (Bogler, Somech, 2023).

Concerning the complement prediction, SIP had a significant partial mediating role in the relationship between the three components of LSM and SOCB. These findings also align with the study by Cao et al. (2022), which indicates that SIP mediates the relationship between mentorship and OCB. It became evident that SIP reinforces the values conveyed through mentorship, creating an environment that promotes and rewards positive behaviour. When institutional policies align with mentor guidance, students are more likely to internalise and exhibit SOCB as an integral part of their academic and social engagement. Clear and well-communicated institutional policies reinforce the significance of SOCB, enhancing students' commitment to engaging in such behaviour.

Furthermore, the crucial role SIP plays in mediating the relationship between LSM and SOCB is worth exploring in this study. According to the SET, when students perceive that the institution values their contributions and well-being, it fosters trust and commitment within the student body (Scerri et al., 2020). As per the SET, trust is an essential component of any exchange relationship, and when students trust that the institution will support and recognise their efforts, they are more likely to engage in SOCB (Huart et al., 2023). The SET emphasises the interdependence between individuals in a relationship. Besides, SIPs prioritising students' well-being and development underscore the idea of mutual dependence, fostering an environment where students feel valued and integral to the institution's success, which contributes to students' engagement in OCB (Scerri

et al., 2020). Moreover, policies influence the expectations, norms, and motivations contributing to SOCB within the academic context.

The present research presents significant insights that add to the existing literature on mentoring and SOCB. In line with the SET, the results suggest that LSM represents a form of social exchange wherein both parties expect certain benefits and incur costs. Students perceive mentorship as gaining knowledge, guidance, and support, while lecturers find fulfilment in fostering student development and contributing to the academic community. The SET emphasises the significance of perceived fairness and equity in social exchanges as crucial determinants of individuals' attitudes and behaviours. SIP functions to establish a perception of fairness and trust. This, in turn, nurtures a constructive and productive exchange, fostering a positive environment. The outcome is the cultivation of SOCB. Thus, SIP acts as a mediator by shaping the mentorship environment, defining roles and expectations, allocating resources, and fostering a positive institutional culture. These factors, in turn, contribute to the development of positive student OCB.

6. Practical Implications

Significant practical implications can be drawn from the findings of this present study. First, the findings indicate that mentoring students in academic, career and personal development contribute to SOCB. The findings suggest that creating and fostering effective LSM programmes can significantly contribute to the development of positive SOCB. Therefore, educational institutions and lecturers can refine and improve existing mentorship programmes, incorporating elements that promote a supportive and conducive environment for the mentees.

Secondly, the study revealed the mediating role of SIP in the relationship between the three forms of student mentorship activities (academic, career and personal development) and SOCB. These findings underscore the importance of understanding the crucial role of institutional policies in facilitating the positive linkage between students' mentorship programmes and SOCB. This implies that institutional and educational policymakers can focus on developing and implementing supportive policies that encourage and reward mentorship efforts. Institutions can work on fostering an organisational culture and climate that values mentorship, promotes supportive policies, and encourages a sense of community and collaboration among students and faculty, ultimately contributing to a more conducive learning environment and overall student well-being.

Lastly, the findings underscore the importance of faculty training and development. Institutions can utilise these findings to design training and development programmes for faculty members, emphasising the importance of effective mentorship and the role of SIP in fostering SOCB. Such programmes can equip faculty members with the necessary resources, training, and support to effectively engage with students in all forms of mentorship activities, provide guidance, and foster positive behavioural outcomes, thereby contributing to developing a more engaged and proactive student community.

7. Limitations and Future Directions

The current study is subject to certain limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, the control measures were confined to sex and course of study, neglecting the inclusion of additional variables that may potentially impact mentoring, such as socioeconomic background and cultural differences. Prior studies have associated different socioeconomic characteristics with varying levels of access to resources and opportunities, influencing their involvement in SOCB activities (Bogler, Somech, 2023). Moreover, cultural differences can shape individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviours, impacting how students perceive and engage in organisational activities within their academic setting (Desselle, Semsick, 2016). Additionally, given that establishing and maintaining a mentoring relationship necessitates a significant time commitment, the duration of the mentor-mentee bond can be seen as an evaluation of the rapport between the mentor and mentee (Blondheim, Somech, 2019). Therefore, future investigations should incorporate controls for pertinent influencing factors related to the proposed associations.

Secondly, our reliance on self-reported survey measures may heighten the risk of eliciting socially desirable participant responses. To counteract potential bias arising from self-reporting, we implemented three specific strategies. Firstly, we promoted an environment where participants felt safe and comfortable sharing their experiences without fear of judgment or repercussions, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. Secondly, we ensured a clear and unbiased survey design, using unbiased language and avoiding leading questions. Additionally, we engaged in pilot testing of

the survey instruments with a diverse sample, which helped identify any potential biases or misinterpretations before the main study. Lastly, we addressed social desirability bias by encouraging participants to provide honest and genuine responses, emphasising the importance of their truthful input in advancing research and promoting understanding. Using indirect or implicit measures, when appropriate, helped minimise the impact of social desirability bias on self-reported data.

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8. Conflict of interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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