



EFFECTS OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC RESILIENCE IN TANZANIA: A CASE OF THE INSTITUTE OF FINANCE MANAGEMENT

By

Ritta Bernego Kaishozi¹, Dr. Zinaida Marwa², Dr. David Mrisho³

^{1,2,3}Faculty of Business and Economics, St. Augustine University of Tanzania.



Abstract

Purpose of the Study: This study aimed to examine the influence of mentorship support—emotional, instrumental, and appraisal on the academic resilience of staff at the Institute of Finance Management (IFM), Tanzania. It sought to understand how different forms of support contribute to coping ability, professional performance, and sustained engagement in higher education contexts.

Methodology: A mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 106 academic staff using structured questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained from semi-structured interviews with 15 mentors. Correlation and regression analyses were performed to determine the relationships and predictive effects of mentorship dimensions on academic resilience. Thematic analysis was used to explore qualitative insights.

Findings: Correlation analysis revealed strong positive relationships between mentorship support and academic resilience: emotional support ($r = 0.915, p < 0.01$), instrumental support ($r = 0.909, p < 0.01$), and appraisal support ($r = 0.944, p < 0.01$). Regression analysis indicated that all three forms of support significantly predicted resilience, with appraisal support having the strongest effect ($B = 0.557, \beta = 0.476, p = 0.000$), followed by instrumental support ($B = 0.346, \beta = 0.305, p = 0.000$) and emotional support ($B = 0.323, \beta = 0.262, p = 0.000$). Qualitative findings highlighted key mentorship practices, including trust-building (40%), fostering tolerance and acceptance (33%), and strategies to maintain mentee focus (27%). Mentors provided emotional guidance, practical resources, and performance feedback, which together enhanced staff resilience, motivation, and professional competence.

Originality: This study contributes to the limited empirical literature on mentorship and academic resilience within Tanzanian higher education. It integrates quantitative and qualitative methods to examine the differentiated effects of emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support within a single institutional context, offering a comprehensive understanding of how mentorship influences resilience among academic staff.

Practical Implications: Findings underscore the need for structured mentorship programs that integrate emotional encouragement, practical assistance, and performance appraisal. Institutions should design inclusive and sustainable mentorship frameworks to enhance staff well-being, motivation, and productivity.

Social Implications: By strengthening academic resilience through mentorship, institutions can foster a supportive professional environment that enhances staff engagement, reduces stress, and promotes positive interpersonal relationships among colleagues.

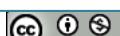
Keywords: Mentorship support, Emotional support, Instrumental support, Appraisal support, Academic resilience, Higher education, Tanzania, Institute of Finance Management

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Academic staff in higher education institutions worldwide face mounting pressures that challenge their professional

resilience and well-being. These pressures include heavy workloads, research expectations, administrative responsibilities, and the need to secure funding. Without

*Corresponding Author: Ritta Bernego Kaishozi.



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sufficient support systems, such stressors can lead to burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and higher attrition rates (Johnson et al., 2024). Mentorship programs have emerged as effective mechanisms for enhancing resilience among academic staff. Structured mentorship providing emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support has been associated with improved coping skills, higher retention rates, and better psychological well-being, particularly in competitive academic environments (Lee & Martinez, 2025). In the African context, mentorship is increasingly recognized as a vital component of academic staff development. However, many institutions rely predominantly on informal mentorship, which limits its long-term impact. Research across African universities demonstrates that formal mentorship programs contribute to greater academic productivity, improved psychological health, and higher job satisfaction (Walube et al., 2024). For example, a study at Makerere University in Uganda found that faculty participating in structured mentorship programs reported increased resilience and higher research output (Walube et al., 2024). Similarly, initiatives like the Transforming Health Education in Tanzania (THET) project highlight the benefits of combining peer and hierarchical mentorship to reduce burnout and maintain research continuity, even during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Walube et al., 2023).

In Tanzania, academic staff face structural and institutional challenges that undermine resilience and performance. These include heavy teaching loads, insufficient research funding, limited professional development opportunities, and administrative overload, which often conflicts with academic duties (Kadikilo et al., 2024; Marozva & Pelser, 2025). National reports indicate that over 68% of academic staff in public institutions experience work-related stress, with nearly 45% showing signs of burnout (TCU, 2024). Weak institutional collaboration, fragmented academic policies, and poorly coordinated career development frameworks further exacerbate low morale, inconsistent performance, and high staff turnover intentions (Ijaiya et al., 2025; Maduelosi & Ezuluofor, 2025). These challenges are reflected at the Institute of Finance Management (IFM), a prominent public higher learning institution established by the Act of Parliament No. 3 of 1972. IFM operates under the Ministry of Finance and Planning and specializes in finance, accountancy, banking, insurance, and social protection. The Institute provides a range of qualifications from certificates and diplomas to undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, positioning it as a key contributor of professional talent to Tanzania's financial and corporate sectors. Within IFM, academic staff encounter high teaching demands, pressure to publish, administrative duties, and limited opportunities for structured mentorship (Toni & Mehta, 2025). Rising staff-to-staff ratios and inconsistent access to research collaboration further strain professional development. Despite strong evidence supporting mentorship as a tool for enhancing resilience and performance, IFM has yet to implement a comprehensive mentorship framework tailored to its institutional context. Consequently, staff motivation may decline, stress levels increase, and opportunities for

professional growth remain limited. Given these challenges, exploring structured mentorship programs that provide emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support is critical for strengthening academic staff resilience at IFM. Understanding how such programs can enhance coping mechanisms, improve job satisfaction, boost academic productivity, and increase staff retention will inform institutional strategies designed to promote long-term staff well-being in a demanding higher education environment.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Mentorship programs are crucial for enhancing academic resilience by supporting professional growth and psychological well-being (Al-Jarf, 2024). However, academic staff in Tanzanian higher education institutions face heavy workloads, limited research funding, weak collaboration, and inadequate access to qualified mentors (Kadikilo et al., 2024), leading to stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction. While mentorship is recognized as valuable in fostering resilience (Mehta, 2025), there is limited empirical evidence on how specific support types emotional, instrumental, and appraisal affect staff resilience, particularly at IFM. The role of emotional support in managing academic pressures and instrumental support in navigating professional challenges remains underexplored (Wong, 2025; Hamid, 2025). Without this understanding, IFM risks implementing generic mentorship programs that do not address staff needs. This study aims to examine the distinct contributions of mentorship support types to academic resilience, providing evidence to inform effective, targeted programs that enhance staff well-being, performance, and retention.

1.3 Specific Research Objectives

- i. To examine the influence of emotional support on academic resilience among academic staff at IFM
- ii. To determine the effect of instrumental support on academic resilience among academic staff at IFM
- iii. To evaluate the impact of appraisal support on academic resilience among academic staff at IFM

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Social Support Theory

Social Support Theory, developed by House (1981), proposes that social support from mentors plays a critical role in enhancing individual resilience and coping with stress. In the context of mentorship, support is provided in three main forms: emotional, instrumental, and appraisal. Emotional support involves empathy, encouragement, and creating a safe space for mentees to discuss challenges. Instrumental support refers to practical assistance such as guidance in research, teaching, career development, and navigating institutional systems. Appraisal support includes constructive feedback that validates skills, acknowledges achievements, and reinforces confidence. Together, these forms of support contribute to professional growth, psychological well-being,

and improved coping capacity (Kim et al., 2023; Oluwafemi & Oyewole, 2024; Tessema et al., 2023).

2.1.2 Assumptions of the Theory

The theory assumes that emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support are essential for building resilience. Emotional support helps mentees feel understood and valued, fostering self-efficacy and psychological safety. Instrumental support enables staff to overcome practical challenges in their professional environment, enhancing competence and performance. Appraisal support strengthens self-confidence by providing recognition and constructive feedback, allowing individuals to maintain motivation and persevere in high-pressure academic settings.

2.1.3 Strengths of the Theory

One key strength of Social Support Theory is its comprehensive framework, which addresses multiple dimensions of support and allows for a nuanced understanding of mentorship impacts (Kagwiria & Mutegi, 2023). The theory also highlights the mechanisms through which support enhances resilience and well-being, offering insight into why mentorship programs are effective (Ochieng' & Awino, 2024). Its empirical validation across diverse contexts, including higher education, further demonstrates its generalizability (Adewale & Olufemi, 2025). Additionally, the theory has practical value, guiding the design of mentorship programs that target specific aspects of resilience, such as self-efficacy through appraisal support or professional competence through instrumental support (Mutuku & Kaviti, 2023).

2.1.4 Weaknesses of the Theory

Despite its strengths, the theory has some limitations. It may not fully account for individual differences in how staff perceive and utilize support, as some individuals may respond more positively to certain support types than others (Sifuna & Chege, 2025). Contextual factors, such as institutional culture and organizational norms, can also influence the effectiveness of mentorship, which the general framework may not adequately capture (Tilya & Msuya, 2023). Furthermore, the relationship between social support and resilience may be bidirectional; resilient individuals may be more likely to seek mentorship, a dynamic not explicitly addressed in the original theory (Wanjala & Ouma, 2024).

2.1.5 Applicability to the Study

In the context of IFM, Social Support Theory provides a valuable lens for understanding how mentorship can strengthen academic resilience. Emotional support from mentors fosters a psychologically safe environment that enhances confidence and coping capacity. Instrumental support enables staff to navigate professional challenges and achieve tangible career milestones, while appraisal support reinforces self-efficacy and well-being through recognition and constructive feedback. Applying this theory allows the study to evaluate how structured mentorship programs can effectively address the professional and psychological needs of academic staff, thereby informing strategies for targeted, evidence-based interventions (Adewale & Olufemi, 2025).

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1 Emotional Support and Resilience

Emotional support in mentorship, encompassing empathy, trust, and encouragement, is essential for fostering resilience among academic staff in high-stress educational environments. Empathy allows mentors to understand and validate mentees' feelings, promoting self-belief, emotional stability, and perseverance in the face of challenges (Selly et al., 2023; Lemoine et al., 2022). Trust in mentors enhances psychological safety, reduces stress, and strengthens coping strategies, thereby supporting academic motivation and performance (Pifer et al., 2024; Kamau & Njoroge, 2021). Encouragement through motivational feedback, recognition, and goal-setting reinforces self-efficacy, optimism, and long-term commitment to professional and academic goals (Abiola et al., 2022; Mensah & Boateng, 2023). Together, these emotional components operate synergistically to enhance resilience, though most studies are limited by geographic focus, small sample sizes, or non-academic contexts. For Tanzanian institutions such as IFM, implementing structured emotional support mechanisms including peer mentoring, psychological counseling, and mentor training in emotional intelligence can effectively strengthen staff resilience and well-being in resource-constrained settings.

2.2.2 Instrumental Support and Resilience

Instrumental support, encompassing tangible aids, physical help, and practical resources, is vital for enhancing academic staff resilience by enabling effective work performance, skill development, and career advancement. Tangible aids such as research infrastructure, teaching tools, office space, and technological equipment provide the foundation for productivity and stress reduction. Studies in Tanzania and beyond show that access to such resources improves job satisfaction, reduces fatigue, and supports resilience, though some findings are limited by context or sample characteristics (Nichols et al., 2023; Mwakyelu & Mollel, 2022). Physical help, including administrative assistance, teaching support, and workload delegation, alleviates stress and allows staff to focus on core academic responsibilities. Research in Tanzanian universities highlights that departmental support, administrative aid, and task-sharing enhance motivation and reduce occupational stress, particularly for underrepresented groups, though broader studies across genders and institutional types are needed (Tarimo & Swai, 2024; Ngowi & Chacha, 2023). Practical resources, such as professional development workshops, structured mentorship, and training programs, equip staff with skills to adapt to challenges, manage stress, and maintain long-term resilience. Evidence from Tanzanian and regional contexts indicates that participation in these initiatives increases self-efficacy, reduces anxiety, and supports career progression, particularly for early-career faculty (Kato & Lusekelo, 2021; Bhebhe et al., 2023).

2.2.3 Appraisal Support and Resilience

Appraisal support in mentorship comprising self-evaluation, advice, and guidance is critical for enhancing academic staff resilience by fostering self-awareness, motivation, and long-

term career alignment. Self-evaluation through structured feedback encourages reflection on performance, promotes adaptability, and reduces professional stress (Casey et al., 2024; Hassan & Mugisha, 2022). While studies outside higher education highlight its benefits, research in Tanzanian universities is needed to assess its impact across disciplines and career stages. Advice provides targeted professional input that helps staff navigate institutional expectations and career challenges. Empirical evidence shows that receiving constructive advice improves self-efficacy, emotional regulation, and stress management, particularly for early-career faculty (Oh et al., 2024; Mwakibete & Kweka, 2023). However, most studies are limited to specific contexts or dimensions of academic work, highlighting the need for broader investigations. Guidance offers ongoing direction, aligning daily activities with long-term career goals and institutional objectives. Tanzanian studies indicate that structured mentoring guidance enhances resilience by improving confidence, reducing burnout, and clarifying professional expectations (Kimaro & Lushakuzi, 2021; Dlamini et al., 2023). Despite these benefits, evidence is constrained by small samples, limited methodological diversity, and contextual differences between countries.

2.3 Research Gap

Social Support Theory provides a framework for understanding how emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support enhance resilience, but its application in academic mentorship in Tanzanian higher education is limited. Most studies focus on Western or general contexts, leaving a gap in understanding how these supports operate within structured mentorship programs at institutions like the Institute of Finance Management (IFM), where cultural and institutional factors may influence outcomes. Empirical research largely comes from non-academic or non-Tanzanian contexts and often relies on small samples and self-reported data. There is a lack of localized studies examining how emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support directly affect academic staff resilience. Few studies compare these support types within a single institution. This study addresses these gaps by exploring the differentiated impact of mentorship support on resilience at IFM, contributing to both theory and practical staff development strategies.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Philosophy

This study adopted a pragmatic research philosophy, which emphasizes practical solutions and flexibility in method selection. Pragmatism integrates both quantitative (positivist) and qualitative (interpretivist) approaches, allowing the use of multiple data collection strategies to address complex, real-world phenomena. In this study, quantitative surveys captured measurable data on mentorship participation and perceived benefits, while qualitative semi-structured interviews explored deeper insights into how mentorship affects emotional and professional resilience. Pragmatism was appropriate as it accommodates the dynamic, human-centered context of higher education, ensuring findings are both theoretically

sound and practically relevant for enhancing mentorship structures at IFM.

3.2 Research Design

A case study design was employed, focusing on IFM as a single, bounded case. This design allows an in-depth exploration of how formal and informal mentorship practices influence academic staff resilience, considering institutional culture, policies, and individual experiences. While limiting generalizability, methodological triangulation through mixed methods and a broad sample enhances credibility and transferability of findings.

3.3 Research Approach

A mixed-methods, sequential explanatory design was adopted. Quantitative data collected via structured questionnaires identified trends and relationships between mentorship support (emotional, instrumental, appraisal) and resilience outcomes. Subsequently, qualitative interviews provided deeper insights into personal experiences and institutional factors explaining these trends. This sequential approach enabled richer interpretation and strengthened methodological triangulation, enhancing the validity and practical relevance of the study.

3.4 Area of Study

The study was conducted at IFM, a leading public higher learning institution in Tanzania specializing in finance, business, and related fields. IFM's diverse academic staff and demanding professional environment make it an appropriate context to examine mentorship effects on resilience. Despite institutional reforms, mentorship remains informal and unevenly accessed, providing an opportunity to evaluate structured emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support mechanisms.

3.5 Population and Sample

The target population comprised all 175 academic staff at IFM, including Tutorial Assistants, Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors, and Professors (Table 3.1). Quantitative surveys were administered to 106 mentees, while 15 mentors participated in semi-structured interviews, selected using purposive sampling for qualitative insights. Stratified random sampling ensured representation across academic levels. Sample size for the survey was calculated using Yamane's formula with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error.

3.6 Data Sources and Collection Methods

Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data included structured questionnaires for mentees and semi-structured interviews with mentors. Secondary sources included institutional reports, HR policies, mentorship guidelines, and performance review records. The questionnaire measured mentorship awareness, participation, satisfaction, and perceived impact on resilience, while interviews explored personal experiences, challenges, and mentorship effectiveness.

3.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics summarized mentorship participation and resilience indicators, while Pearson correlation and multiple regression assessed relationships between mentorship support (emotional, instrumental, appraisal) and resilience outcomes:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Qualitative interview data were analyzed thematically, including transcription, coding, theme development, and linking findings to research questions.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity was ensured through a pilot test with 10 academic staff and expert review, refining instruments for clarity and alignment with theoretical models. Reliability for quantitative data was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (≥ 0.70 considered acceptable).

Reliability Analysis Results

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
Emotional	3	0.827
instrumental	3	0.788
Appraisal	3	0.814
Resilience	3	0.917

For qualitative data, standardized interview guides and multiple coders enhanced consistency and inter-coder reliability.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to IFM's Research Ethics Board guidelines. Key considerations included informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and formal ethical approval. Data were anonymized, securely stored, and used solely for academic purposes.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Correlation analysis

		EMOTI	INSTRUME	APPRAI	RESILIE
		ON	NTAL	SAL	NCE
EMOTI	Pearson Correlation	1	.829**	.841**	.915**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	93	93	93	93
INSTRU	Pearson Correlation	.829**	1	.812**	.909**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	93	93	93	93

	N	93	93	93	93
APPRAI	Pearson Correlation	.841**	.812**	1	.944**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	93	93	93	93
RESILIE	Pearson Correlation	.915**	.909**	.944**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	93	93	93	93

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings reveal strong, statistically significant positive correlations between all forms of mentorship support and academic resilience. Emotional support is highly correlated with resilience ($r = 0.915$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the importance of encouragement, trust, and acceptance in fostering confidence, motivation, and job satisfaction. Instrumental support, including resources, task assistance, and training, also shows a strong correlation with resilience ($r = 0.909$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that practical support enables staff to manage academic demands effectively. Appraisal support, encompassing feedback, guidance, and career advice, exhibits the strongest correlation ($r = 0.944$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that reflective guidance and constructive feedback substantially enhance professional confidence and adaptive capacity. High inter-correlations among the mentorship dimensions (ranging from 0.812 to 0.841) indicate that emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support function synergistically, forming a comprehensive mentorship system that maximizes resilience. Overall, the results underscore the need for holistic mentorship programs that integrate emotional, practical, and evaluative support to strengthen academic staff resilience, performance, and well-being at IFM.

4.2 Regression Coefficients

a. Dependent Variable: RESILIENCE

		Standardized Coefficient			
		Unstandardized Coefficients	S	T	
	Std.	B	Error	Beta	
Model					
1	(Constant)	.225	.096	2.351	.021
	EMOTION	.323	.050	.262	6.433
	INSTRUME	.346	.043	.305	8.111
	NTAL				
	APPRaisal	.557	.046	.476	12.21
	L				.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

$$\text{RESILIENCE} = 0.225 + .323(\text{Emotion}) + .346(\text{instrumental}) + 0.557(\text{appraisal}) + .096$$

The regression results indicate that all three forms of mentorship support have significant positive effects on academic resilience at IFM. Emotional support ($B = 0.323$, $p = 0.000$) suggests that encouragement, trust, and emotional guidance increase resilience, helping staff manage stress and maintain motivation. Instrumental support ($B = 0.346$, $p = 0.000$) demonstrates that practical assistance, resources, and training enhance resilience by enabling staff to perform effectively in their roles. Appraisal support has the strongest impact ($B = 0.557$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that feedback, performance guidance, and career advice are critical for building confidence, improving skills, and achieving professional goals. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of integrated mentorship programs that combine emotional, practical, and evaluative support to strengthen academic resilience among staff.

4.3 Discussion of findings

4.3.1 Influence of emotional support on the resilience of academic staff at IFM

The study found a strong positive relationship between emotional support and academic resilience among IFM staff ($r = 0.915$, $p < 0.01$), with emotional support also strongly correlated with instrumental ($r = 0.829$) and appraisal support ($r = 0.841$). Regression analysis confirmed that emotional support is a significant predictor of resilience ($B = 0.323$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that trust, encouragement, and emotional guidance substantially enhance staff confidence, motivation, and ability to cope with academic pressures. These results align with Social Support Theory, which posits that emotional support buffers stress and strengthens coping mechanisms (House, 1981; Cohen & Wills, 1985). The thematic analysis of emotional support in mentorship at IFM revealed three key strategies that enhance academic resilience. Trust-building strategies were the most frequently reported (6 participants, 40%), emphasizing confidentiality, regular communication, and sharing personal experiences to create a secure and reliable mentor-mentee relationship. Practices fostering tolerance and acceptance were noted by 5 participants (33%) and included allowing mentees to express perspectives freely, setting clear ground rules, ensuring they feel valued, and demonstrating empathy, which promoted inclusivity and psychological safety. Collectively, these strategies highlight the central role of emotional support in strengthening resilience through trust, inclusivity, and sustained engagement. The findings are supported by prior research showing that emotional mentoring improves engagement, reduces stress, and enhances professional self-efficacy (Selly et al., 2023; Kamau & Njoroge, 2021; Lemoine et al., 2022; Ahmeti et al., 2022).

4.3.2 Effect of Instrumental Support on the Resilience of Academic Staff at IFM

Correlation and regression analyses indicate that instrumental support is a significant predictor of academic resilience at IFM. Instrumental support showed a strong positive correlation with resilience ($r = 0.909$, $p < 0.01$) and was also positively associated with emotional ($r = 0.829$) and appraisal support ($r = 0.812$), highlighting the complementary nature of

mentorship dimensions. Regression results confirmed its predictive power ($B = 0.346$, $p = 0.000$), showing that a one-unit increase in instrumental support corresponds to a 0.346-unit increase in resilience, holding other factors constant. This underscores the importance of providing materials, task assistance, and training opportunities to help staff cope with academic challenges and maintain performance.

Qualitative findings further revealed that mentors at IFM primarily provided materials, templates, and tools (58%), followed by practical assistance (25%) and opportunities for mentees (17%), emphasizing a focus on enhancing academic effectiveness. These findings align with Social Support Theory, which posits that tangible aid and practical resources reduce stress, improve coping mechanisms, and strengthen resilience (House, 1981; Cohen & Wills, 1985). Studies by Tarimo & Swai (2024), Ngowi & Chacha (2023), Bhebhe et al. (2023), Nicholls et al. (2023), and Mwakyelu & Mollel (2022) corroborate that access to operational resources, guidance, and practical support enhances professional capacity, confidence, and adaptability. At IFM, the provision of structured academic tools and online resources also reflects the informational dimension of Social Support Theory, empowering mentees to engage in independent research, improve competence, and foster academic self-efficacy.

4.3.3 Impact of Appraisal on the Resilience of Academic staff at IFM

Correlation and regression analyses demonstrate that appraisal support is a key predictor of academic resilience at IFM. Appraisal support showed a very strong positive correlation with resilience ($r = 0.944$, $p < 0.01$) and was also strongly associated with emotional ($r = 0.841$) and instrumental support ($r = 0.812$), indicating that evaluative guidance complements other mentorship dimensions. Regression results confirmed its significance ($B = 0.557$, $t = 12.215$, $p = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.476$), meaning that a one-unit increase in appraisal support leads to a 0.557-unit increase in resilience, holding other factors constant. These findings highlight that structured feedback, reflective guidance, and career advice enhance confidence, motivation, and professional competence. This aligns with Social Support Theory, which emphasizes that evaluative support reduces uncertainty, strengthens self-efficacy, and improves coping capacity (Cohen & Wills, 1985; House, 1981). Studies by Oh et al. (2024), Casey et al. (2024), Hassan & Mugisha (2022), and Mwakibete & Kweka (2023) corroborate that appraisal-focused mentorship improves performance, adaptive capacity, and psychological resilience.

Qualitative findings support these results, showing that mentorship at IFM emphasizes reflection (83%), career guidance (75%), and academic performance support (92%). Strategies include journaling, guided questioning, goal review, networking, study planning, and access to credible resources, integrating emotional, instrumental, and informational support dimensions. These practices enhance self-regulated learning, critical thinking, skill development, and overall resilience, demonstrating that appraisal support operates as a mechanism for both professional competence

and psychological well-being, consistent with the holistic principles of Social Support Theory.

5.1 Summary of findings

The study findings indicate that all three forms of mentorship support which are emotional, instrumental, and appraisal significantly enhance academic resilience among staff at the Institute of Finance Management (IFM). Emotional support, through trust, encouragement, and empathy, fosters confidence, motivation, and the ability to cope with stress and institutional pressures. Instrumental support, including practical assistance, access to resources, and guidance on tasks, equips staff with the tools and skills needed to navigate academic demands effectively, improving efficiency, competence, and professional engagement. Appraisal support, through constructive feedback, performance guidance, and career advice, enables staff to reflect on strengths and areas for growth, set realistic goals, and make informed decisions, thereby enhancing self-awareness, accountability, and motivation. Collectively, these mentorship dimensions create a supportive environment that strengthens resilience, empowers staff to manage challenges, and promotes sustained professional and academic development.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support from mentors each play a critical role in enhancing the academic resilience of staff at the Institute of Finance Management (IFM). Emotional support fosters trust, encouragement, and psychological security, enabling staff to manage stress, maintain focus, and persevere through challenges with confidence. Instrumental support provides practical assistance, access to resources, and guidance on tasks, equipping staff with the tools and skills necessary to perform effectively, overcome operational challenges, and adapt to complex work environments. Appraisal support offers constructive feedback, performance evaluation, and career guidance, promoting self-awareness, goal-setting, and continuous professional growth. Collectively, these mentorship dimensions create a supportive environment that strengthens resilience, enhances competence and motivation, and enables academic staff to navigate professional and personal challenges successfully.

5.3 Area of further studies

Future studies could explore long-term resilience outcomes by conducting longitudinal research that tracks academic staff over several years, providing insight into how mentorship support impacts resilience over time rather than at a single point. Additionally, research could be expanded to include a larger, more diverse sample across multiple higher learning institutions in Tanzania, capturing different mentorship cultures, institutional structures, and resource levels to improve the generalizability of findings. Comparative studies examining formal versus informal mentorship models could also be conducted to determine how each uniquely influences emotional, instrumental, and appraisal support, offering deeper understanding of the most effective mentorship structures for enhancing academic resilience.

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