

The Mediating Role of Employee Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Internal Marketing and Customer Satisfaction in Telecommunication Sector: A Case Study of Sudani Telecom Company) (2011 - 2020)

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Abstract:-

The main objective of this research is to illuminate the effect of Internal Marketing on Sudani Customers Satisfaction, and to investigate how does Employee Job Satisfaction can play as a mediator in this relation. The problem in this study is that most of Sudani company customers are feeling unsatisfied with the services provided by the company, some customers are suffering from the quality of service, some are complaining about service high cost and others are suffering from poor response to their complaints. This customers dissatisfaction might be attributed to the absence or improper application of Internal Marketing strategy in Sudani company. The study adopted four main hypotheses: **H1:** There is a statistically significant relationship between internal marketing and employee job satisfaction in

Sudani company. **H2:** There is a statistically significant relationship between internal marketing and customer satisfaction, in Sudani company. **H3:** There is a statistically significant relationship between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, in Sudani company. **H4:** Employee job satisfaction mediates the relationship between internal marketing and customer satisfaction, in Sudani company. This study adopted the descriptive analytical approach, in addition the historical approach. The results of this study found that, internal marketing has a positive significant effect on employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction in Sudani company. The Study also found that employee job satisfaction has a positive significant effect on customer satisfaction, in Sudani Company. On the other hand, partially mediating role of employee job satisfaction has been determined for the relationship between Internal Marketing and Customer Satisfaction in Sudani Company. **Keywords:** Internal Marketing, Employee Job Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction.

الدور الوسيط للرضا الوظيفي في العلاقة بين التسويق الداخلي ورضا العملاء في قطاع

الاتصالات (بالتطبيق على شركة سوداني للاتصالات)

(2011 - 2020)

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المستخلص:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في الدور الوسيط للرضا الوظيفي في العلاقة بين التسويق الداخلي ورضا العملاء في قطاع الاتصالات، بالتطبيق على شركة سوداني للاتصالات. الهدف الرئيس لهذه الدراسة هو إلقاء الضوء على تأثير التسويق الداخلي على رضا عملاء شركة سوداني، ومعرفة كيف يمكن للرضا الوظيفي أن يلعب دور الوسيط بين هذه العلاقة. مشكلة الدراسة تكمن في أن معظم عملاء شركة سوداني، يشعرون بعدم الرضا عن الخدمات التي تقدمها الشركة، فبعضهم يتذمر من جودة الخدمة، والبعض يشتكي من الأسعار الغالية

للخدمة والآخر يشتمل من ضعف الاستجابة لبلاغات الأعطال، وعدم الرضا هذا ربما نتيجة لغياب أو ضعف تطبيق سياسات التسويق الداخلي بشركة سوداني للاتصالات. إتمدت الدراسة أربع فرضيات رئيسة هي: الفرضية الأولى: توجد علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين التسويق الداخلي والرضا الوظيفي في شركة سوداني للاتصالات. الفرضية الثانية: توجد علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين التسويق الداخلي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات. الفرضية الثالثة: توجد علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الرضا الوظيفي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات. الفرضية الرابعة: الرضا الوظيفي يقوم بدور الوسيط في العلاقة بين التسويق الداخلي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات. إتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، بالإضافة إلى المنهج التاريخي. خلصت نتائج الدراسة إلى وجود علاقات إيجابية قوية بين التسويق الداخلي وكلاً من الرضا الوظيفي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات، كذلك خلصت الدراسة إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية قوية بين الرضا الوظيفي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات، وعلى صعيد آخر أثبتت الدراسة بأن للرضا الوظيفي دور جزئي كوسيط للعلاقة بين التسويق الداخلي ورضا العملاء في شركة سوداني للاتصالات. الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق الداخلي، الرضا الوظيفي، رضا العملاء.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Internal Marketing (IM) is a new concept of marketing, in which the company deal with their employees as internal customers, and deal with their jobs as internal products. As the situation in the External Marketing, the Internal Marketing is aiming to design these internal products (Jobs) to fulfil the internal customers (employees) requirements.

Internal Marketing has many elements, for simplicity this study shed the light onto four elements: Reward & Incentives, Training & Development, Empowerment and Internal Communications.

Customer Satisfaction is the measurement of how a product or a service met the consumer aspiration after the buying process. Most companies build their strategies to meet the highest level of customer satisfaction, because satisfied customers will attract more ones, while dissatisfied customers will promote negative messages to other people. On the other hand, the more the customer

is satisfied the more the sales are increase, leading to increase in company revenues and profits.

Employee Satisfaction is defined as the positive feeling that an employee feels toward his job, and to which extent that his basic requirements has been fulfilled in a company. Telecommunications sector as many of the service sectors, consider their employees as their highest value asset, hence they are trying their best to maintain their employees satisfied. Smart companies always own proper systems for evaluating, motivating, qualifying and developing their employees. Investing in employees is the best project that achieve feasible returns for any company.

Sudani Telecommunications Company is one of Sudatel Telecommunications Group (STG), providing telecommunication services in Sudan. Sudani company is considered one of the leading companies in Sudan that take care of its customers. Sudani customer' care centers are spreading among all cities in the country, in addition to its call center that receives the complains and enquiries from Sudani customers through telephone calls. Sudani company also considered from the leading companies in Sudan that maintain excellent work environment to attract employees. However, in such competition environment, Sudani company should double its efforts to keep both its customers and employees loyal to the company.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Internal Marketing:

The internal marketing (IM) concept was first proposed in the mid 1970s as a way of achieving consistent service quality as

a major problem in the services area. Its basic premise was to have satisfied customers, the firm must also have satisfied employees and that this could be best achieved by treating employees as customers, i.e., by applying the principles of marketing to job design and employee motivation. Since then, the concept has seen a number of major developments and its application is no longer confined to the services area. It has been shown that any type of organization can use IM to facilitate the implementation of its external marketing strategy or any other organizational strategies (Pervaiz et al., 2002)⁽¹⁾.

2.2. Customer Satisfaction:

Customer satisfaction is the sense that customers get when they experience service that fulfills or surpasses their expectation. Primarily in marketing, satisfaction is defined as the global evaluation of relationship fulfillment by a firm or the positively affected state resulting from the assessment of a firm's working relationship. Satisfaction is also one of the most important elements to explain any type of relationship among participants and a consumer's fulfillment response.

Generally, customer satisfaction is known as an outcome of service quality, which means that it is related to the quality of the products or services provided to the customer in a positive manner. The level of customer satisfaction is also believed to be enhanced, along with an increased level of perceived quality of the product or service. In particular, customer satisfaction is considered to be an intrinsic variable that explains returning customers and their post-behaviors of purchasing products and services.

2.3. Employee Job Satisfaction:

Employee Job Satisfaction refers to the employees' recognition to their jobs. It was perceived by scholars as an emotional state that results from employees' experiences at work. The argument was that if employees demonstrate highly satisfied experiences with their jobs, they will enjoy an emotional state, that described it as the extent of employees' likeness to their job, whereas, others referred employees' satisfaction to the happiness of the employees with their job, in another word, it is the fulfilment of their desires and wants at work in terms of remuneration, workload, perceptions of supervision, available resources, flexible working conditions, and team working, etc. On the contrary, employees whom needs and expectations are not met, are likely to express negative attitude in their performance (M. Ateia, 2016)⁽²⁾.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive analytical approach was used for the study, in which two Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the data from Sudani customers and Sudani employees, respectively. Each construct had two parts, part one for the demographic characteristics like respondent's age, gender, educational level and work experience; whereas part two for the questions regarding the variables of the study. The two questionnaires were used Five-Point Likert Scale starting from (1) strongly disagreed, to (5) strongly agreed.

Table (3.1) illustrates the final samples used in the study.

Reliability of the scale was checked using Cronbach Alpha

Technique, “alpha reliabilities of all variables were well above 0.70, which proves that data obtained was reliable enough to proceed to further analysis”(Helms et al., 2006)⁽³⁾. Table (3.2) shows Alpha reliabilities for all variables.

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for Windows (V.20) and Process Procedure for SPSS (V.4) by Andrew F. Hayes, were used to analyze the quantitative data generated from the questionnaires, whilst the data from the interviews was analyze qualitatively by content analysis using tables and charts.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis:

4.1. Demographic Data:

4.1.1. Respondents Gender:

For Sudani customers in the selected sample, 63% were males and 37% were females, while for Sudanese employees in the selected sample, 61% were males while the remaining 39% were females, showing higher male respondents in both samples (See table (4.1), charts (4.1) and (4.2)).

4.1.2. Respondents Ages:

Age of respondents ranging between 20 -40 years, represented the majority of the respondents in both Sudanese customers and employees (see table (4.2), charts (4.3) and (4.4)).

4.1.3. Respondents Educational Level:

Table (4.3), charts (4.5) and (4.6) show a high educated respondents from both selected samples.

4.2. Hypotheses Testing:

4.2.1. First hypothesis testing (H1):

In order to find out the relationship between Internal Marketing (IM) and Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) a linear regression was

used in which (IM) was considered as explanatory variable and (EJS) as dependent variable. The result of the regression model demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between (IM) and (EJS) by. This can be inferred from the t value and its associated p value (See Table (4.4)).

The explanatory variable explains 74.5% (R^2) of variance in (EJS), showing that a very strong relation between (IM) and (EJS). By referring to F value and its p-value, it may be concluded that the model is valid and there is a correlation between (IM) and (EJS) values. To verify the existence of the mention relation, a collinearity test was carried out. The result revealed the VIF factor of the model was ($1.00 < 3.00$) indicating the non-existing of collinearity problem.

4.2.2. Second hypothesis testing ($H2$):

The dependent variable Customer Satisfaction (CS), was regressed on predicting variable Internal Marketing (IM), to test the hypothesis $H2$ (see Table (4.5)). (IM) significantly predicted (CS), $F(1,126) = 705.484$, $p < 0.001$, which indicates that (IM) can play a significant role in shaping (CS) ($\beta = 0.922$, $p < 0.001$) these results clearly direct the positive affect of (IM). Moreover, the $R^2 = 0.849$, depicts that the model explains 84.9% of the variance in (CS). Hence $H2$ was supported.

4.2.3. Third hypothesis testing ($H3$):

The dependent variable Customer Satisfaction (CS), was regressed on predicting variable Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS), to test the hypothesis $H3$ (see Table (4.6)). (EJS) significantly

predicted (CS), $F(1,126) = 385.595$, $p < 0.001$, which indicates that (IM) can play a significant role in shaping (CS) ($\beta = 0.869$, $p < 0.001$) these results clearly direct the positive affect of (EJS). Moreover, the $R^2 = 0.755$, depicts that the model explains 75.5% of the variance in (CS). Hence **H3** was supported.

4.2.4. Fourth hypothesis testing (H4):

Mediating analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) on the linkage between Internal Marketing (IM) and Customer Satisfaction (CS). Baron & Kenny Model was used (Baron & Kenny, 1986)⁽⁴⁾.

The results revealed that the total effect of (IM) on (CS) was significant ($\beta = 0.922$, $t = 26.561$, $p < 0.001$). with the inclusion of the mediating variable Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS), the impact of (IM) on (CS) was found significant ($\beta = 0.673$, $t = 10.519$, $p < 0.001$). this shows that the relationship between (IM) and (CS) is partially mediating by (EJS) (see Table (4.7), Figure (4.1a) and Figure (4.1b)). Hence **H4** was supported partially.

The same results were yield using PROCESS Procedure for SPSS version 4.0 developed by Andrew F. Hayes Model 4 (See Figure (4. 2)).

5. Conclusion:

5.1. Findings:

- The study reviled that there is a positive effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable with a rate of 92.2%.

- The study indicates that there is a positive effect between the independent variable and the mediator variable with a rate of 86.3%.
- The study found a positive relationship the mediator variable and the dependent variable with a rate of 86.9%.
- The study Approved that the mediator variable partially mediates the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable with a rate of 67.3%.
- For the Internal Marketing elements, training & development ranked the highest level with mean of 4.51, then reward & incentives with mean of 4.34, then employee empowerment with mean of 4.03 and internal communication with mean of 3.95.
- In Customer Satisfaction, customers ranked Sudani employees with the highest level of satisfaction with mean of 4.22, then Sudani quality of service with mean of 4.09, then Sudani service prices with mean of 3.81 and Sudani service centers with mean of 3.62.
- Employee Job Satisfaction ranked the highest level of satisfaction within the study variables with mean of 4.46.

5.2. Recommendations:

- Organization should satisfy internal employees, which directly reflected in external customer satisfaction.
- Training and development should be encouraged especially for employees in areas of effective customer service.
- Management has to define a clear policy for Rewards

& Incentives for their employees, in order to raise their satisfaction level.

- Employees need adequate empowerment in order to reach a confidence level, capable to enhance their performance, which directly reflect in customer satisfaction.
- Managers have to facilitate flow of information and enhance effective internal communication system, to ensure effective communication within the organization.

Tables & Figures

Table (3.1): Final Study Samples

Questionnaire Type	Population size	Required Sample Size	Distributed Questionnaires	Received Questionnaires	Valid Questionnaires	% of Research Sample
Sudani Customers	1,000	278	280	242	242	86.45%
Sudani Employees	200	132	135	127	127	94.07%

(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data, 2021)

Table (3.2): Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficients for the Study Variables

	Variable/Items	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
1	Rewards & Incentives	3	0.980
2	Training & Development	3	0.968
3	Employee Empowerment	3	0.997
4	Internal Communications	3	0.972
5	Internal Marketing (Independent)	12	0.985
6	Sudani Employee (People)	3	0.808
7	Sudani Service Centers (Place)	3	0.912

	Variable/Items	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
8	Sudani Service Quality (Product)	3	0.833
9	Sudani Service Prices (Price)	3	0.963
10	Customer Satisfaction (Dependent)	12	0.831
11	Employee Job Satisfaction (Mediator)	3	0.960

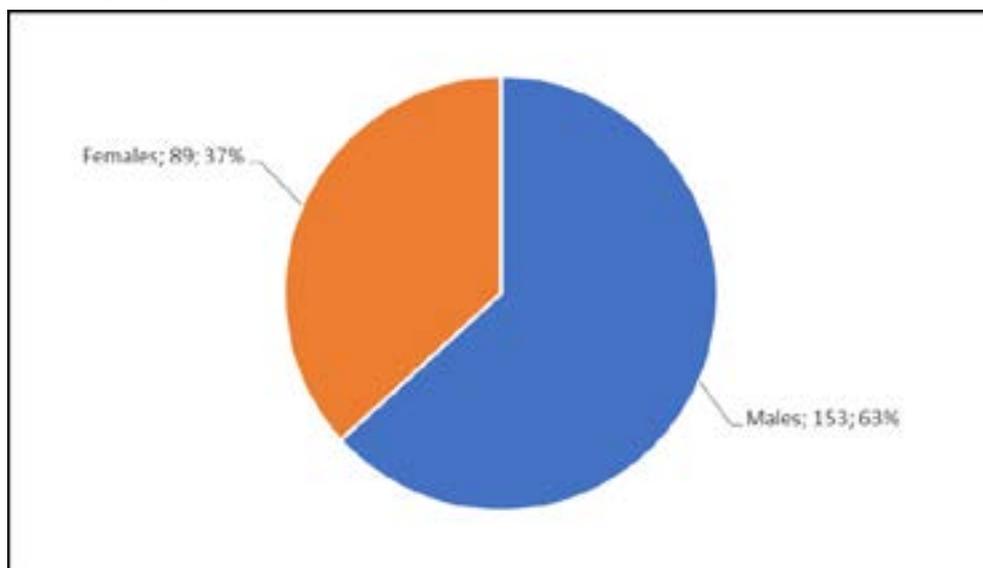
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the SPSS, 2021)

Table (4.1): Gender of the Respondents

	Sudani Customers		Sudani Employees	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Males	153	63%	78	61%
Females	89	37%	49	39%
Total	242	100%	127	100%

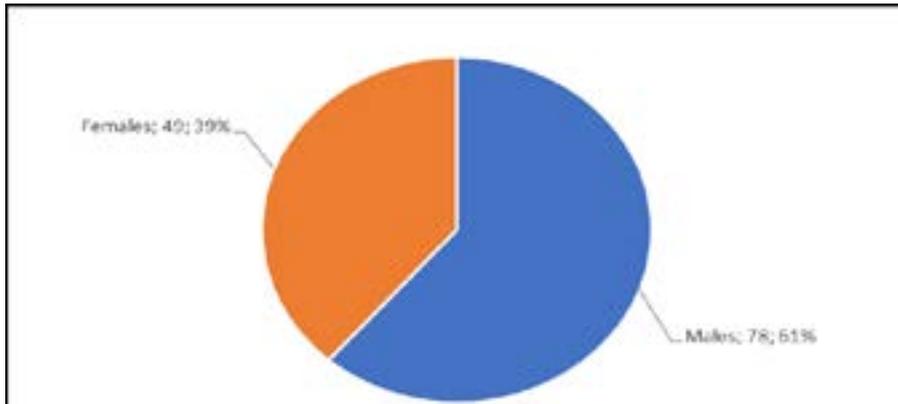
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data, 2021)

Chart (4.1): Sudani Customers' Gender



(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.1))

Chart (4.2): Sudani Employees' Categorized Gender



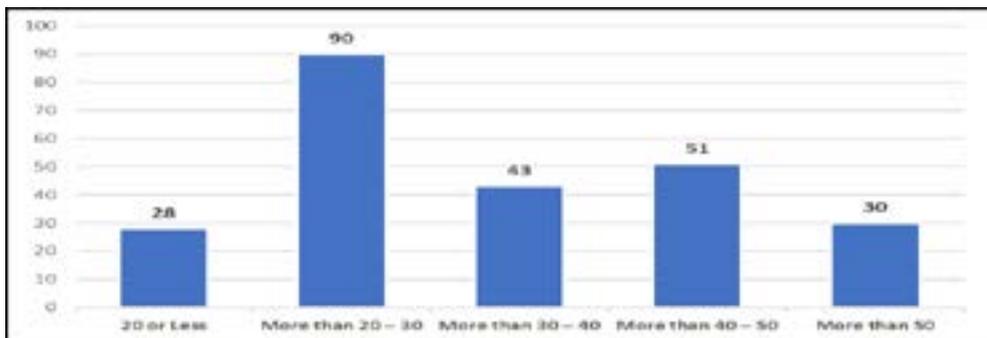
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.1))

Table (4.2): Categorized Ages of Respondents

Ages Category (In Years)	Sudani Customers		Sudani Employees	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 20	28	12%	8	6%
20 – < 30	90	37%	29	23%
30 – < 40	43	18%	46	36%
40 – < 50	51	21%	31	25%
50 and above	30	12%	13	10%
Total	242	100%	127	100%

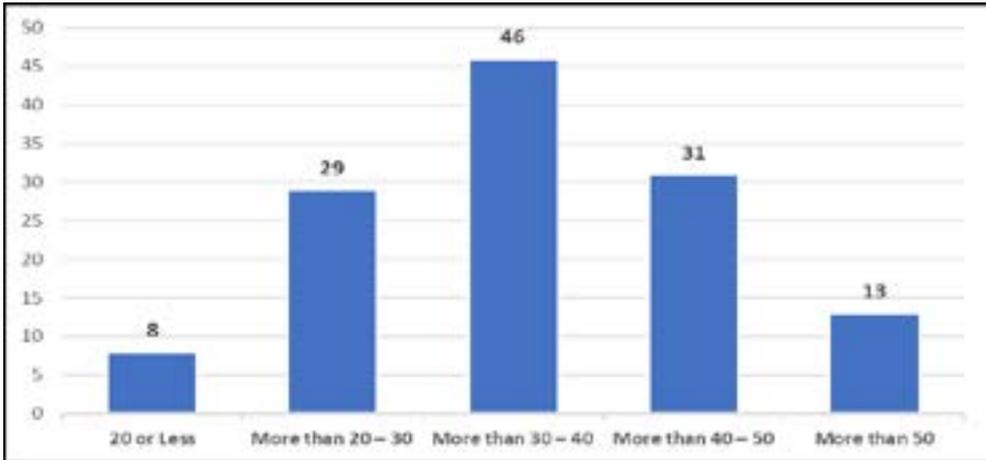
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data, 2021)

Chart (4.3): Sudani Customers' Categorized Ages



(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.2))

Chart (4.4): Sudani Employees' Categorized Ages



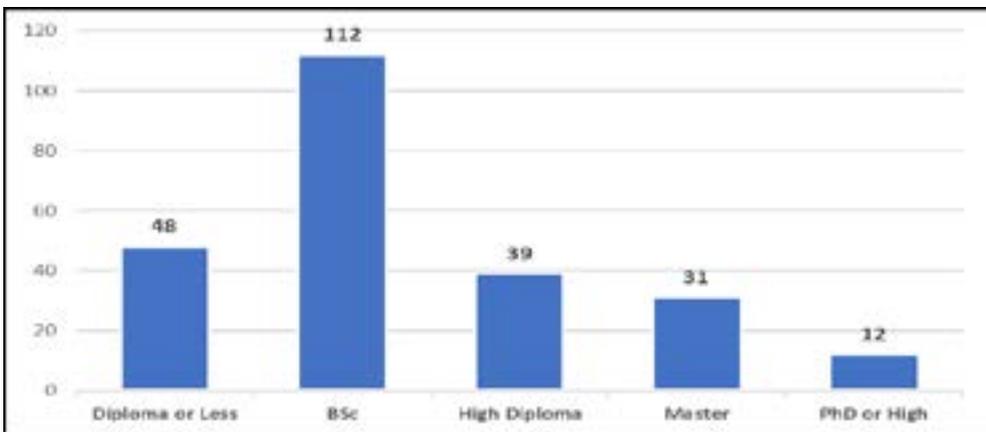
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.2))

Table (4.3): Categorized Educational Levels of Respondents

Educational Levels	Sudani Customers		Sudani Employees	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Diploma or less	48	20%	7	6%
BSc	112	46%	61	48%
High Diploma	39	16%	6	5%
Master	31	13%	36	28%
PhD or High	12	5%	17	13%
Total	242	100%	127	100%

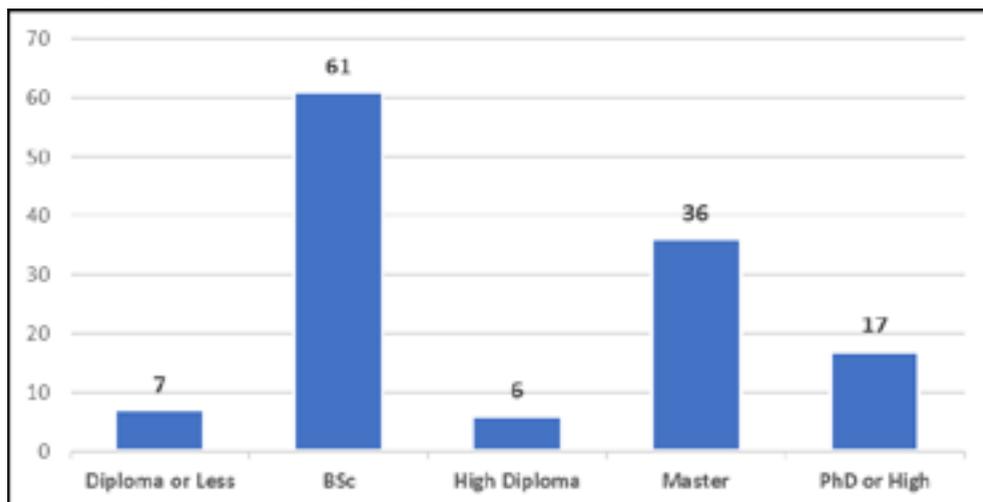
(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data, 2021)

Chart (4.5): Sudani Customers' Educational Levels



(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.3))

Chart (4.6): Sudani Employees' Educational Levels



(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the Table (4.3))

Table (4.4): Linear Regression Test for (EJS) and (IM)

	R	R ²	F	p	β	t	p	VIF
IM	0.863	0.745	365.507	.000	0.863	19.118	.000	1.000

*Dependent Variable (EJS)

(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the SPSS, 2021)

Table (4.5): Regression Test Output for H2 Hypothesis

	R	R ²	F	p	β	t	p	VIF
IM	0.922	0.849	705.484	.000	0.922	26.561	.000	1.000

*Dependent Variable (CS)

(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the SPSS, 2021)

Table (4.6): Regression Test Output for H3 Hypothesis

	R	R ²	F	p	β	t	p	VIF
EJS	0.869	0.755	385.595	.000	0.869	19.637	.000	1.000

*Dependent Variable (CS)

(Source: Prepared by the researcher from the SPSS, 2021)

Table (4.7): Mediating Analysis using Baron and Kenny Model

Total Effect IM → CS		Direct Effect IM → CS		H4: IM → EJS → CS	Indirect Effect				
coefficient	p-Value	coefficient	p-Value		coefficient	SD	t-Value	R	BI (2.5%,97.5%)
0.922	0.000	0.673	0.000		0.249	0.086	4.401	0.933	0.085 – 0.417

(Source: Prepared by the researcher using Baron and Kenny Model, 2021)

Figure (4.1a): Mediation Analysis using Baron and Kenny Model

(Source: Prepared by the researcher using Baron and Kenny Model)

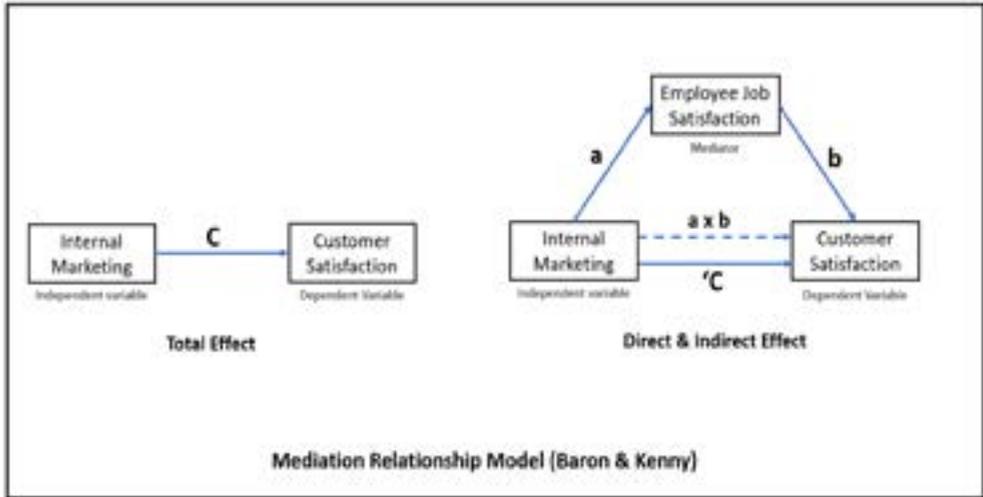


Figure (4.1b): Mediation Analysis applied in the Study

(Source: Prepared by the researcher using Baron and Kenny Model)

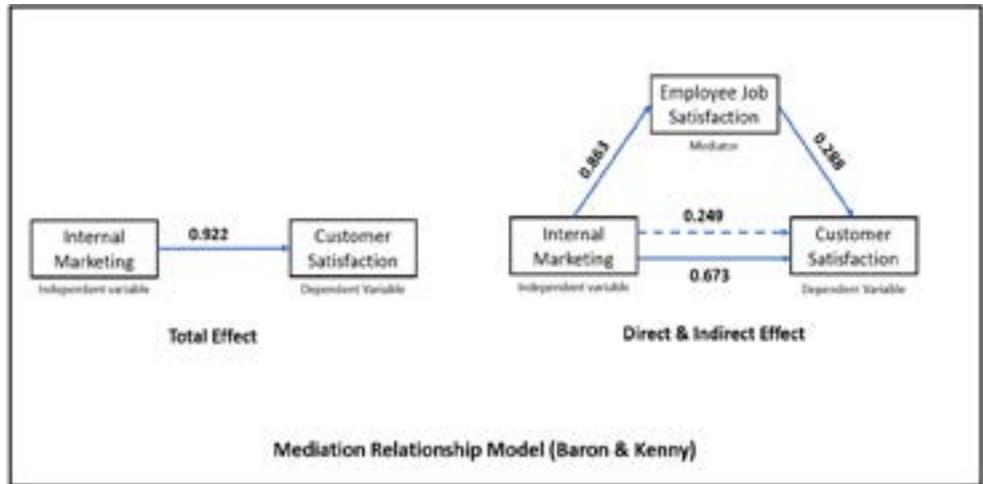


Figure (4.2): PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Output

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Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.0 *****

      Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com
      Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

*****

Model : 4
  Y : CS
  X : IM
  M : EJS

Sample
Size: 127

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c_cs
  .9466      .0356    26.5609  .0000    .8761     1.0171    .9217

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c'_cs
  .6912      .0657    10.5187  .0000    .5612     .8213     .6730

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI    BootULCI
EJS      .2554     .0857     .0896     .4260

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI    BootULCI
EJS      .2486     .0862     .0848     .4173

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

----- END MATRIX -----

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(Source: Prepared by the researcher using the SPSS, 2021)

Fotnot:

- (1) Pervaiz K. Ahmed and Mohammed Rafiq, "Internal Marketing: Tools and concept, for customer-focused management", British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2002:p 1.
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