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**The impact of Emotional intelligence in the automotive after sales at HAVAL
company in Saudi Arabia**

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Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, the significance of emotional intelligence (EQ) has gained increased attention across various sectors, including automotive sales and after-sales services. Emotional intelligence, often defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others, is recognized as a key determinant of effective interpersonal relationships and overall workplace performance. In customer-oriented industries, particularly in automotive after-sales services, the role of emotional intelligence becomes increasingly essential, as it contributes to creating positive customer experiences and fostering long-term relationships. Within the context of HAVAL Company, a prominent player in the Saudi Arabian automotive market, understanding the role of EQ among after-sales personnel offers valuable insights into enhancing customer satisfaction, optimizing service quality, and supporting business growth in a competitive environment (AlDosiry et al. 2016)

Background of the Automotive After-Sales Industry

The automotive industry, an essential pillar of economic growth and consumer spending, is known for its intricate combination of product quality, customer service, and after-sales support. After-sales service is a key touchpoint where customer loyalty is cultivated, as it encompasses a broad range of services such as maintenance, repair, and the provision of spare parts. In Saudi Arabia, the automotive after-sales industry is rapidly expanding due to growing vehicle ownership rates, the influx of international automotive brands, and an increased emphasis on customer-centered service offerings. For companies like HAVAL, an international brand that has garnered substantial market share in the Middle Eastern market, sustaining customer loyalty through exceptional after-sales service has become a strategic priority. In this regard, the emotional intelligence of the service staff plays a crucial role, as they interact directly with customers, handle complaints, and contribute to the overall brand experience (Anderson et al 2015)

Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Customer Service

Emotional intelligence in customer service entails the ability of service providers to manage their emotions effectively, empathize with customers, and maintain composure during potentially challenging interactions. Research indicates that employees with high EQ exhibit greater adaptability, stress tolerance, and problem-solving abilities, all of which are critical skills in the automotive after-sales domain, where complex issues and high customer expectations are common. Service staff with strong emotional intelligence skills are more capable of addressing customer grievances, anticipating

customer needs, and adapting their communication styles to suit diverse customer personalities. Consequently, emotional intelligence is not only a skill for conflict resolution but also a competitive asset that enhances overall customer satisfaction and loyalty, directly impacting the company's reputation and financial performance (Abdullah 2023)

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Employee Performance

Emotional intelligence is also recognized for its role in enhancing employee performance across various dimensions. For after-sales personnel, whose responsibilities often involve handling high-pressure situations, emotional intelligence can serve as a buffer against occupational stress and burnout. Employees with high EQ tend to demonstrate resilience, greater job satisfaction, and improved interpersonal communication skills, all of which are critical in a customer-centric environment. Additionally, EQ enhances teamwork and collaboration, as employees who can manage their emotions effectively are more likely to contribute positively to a team's dynamics. In the automotive after-sales industry, where teamwork is essential for efficient operations, emotional intelligence fosters a work environment conducive to cooperation and mutual support, enabling teams to meet customer demands more effectively (Purnama 2024)

Relevance of Emotional Intelligence for HAVAL in Saudi Arabia

HAVAL Company, known for its commitment to quality and customer service, has strategically positioned itself in the Saudi Arabian market as a brand that prioritizes the customer experience. In Saudi Arabia, where consumer expectations are high and brand loyalty is influenced by service quality, HAVAL's success in the automotive after-sales market depends largely on the capabilities of its service staff. With increased market competition and rising customer expectations, HAVAL must distinguish itself by enhancing its after-sales services, an objective that can be achieved by investing in the emotional intelligence of its workforce. By equipping after-sales personnel with the skills needed to understand and respond effectively to customer emotions, HAVAL can improve customer interactions, reduce service-related complaints, and foster a loyal customer base.

Furthermore, with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiative emphasizing customer-centric business practices, HAVAL's focus on emotional intelligence aligns well with the nation's broader goals of elevating service standards and fostering a thriving, diversified economy. The application of EQ in HAVAL's after-sales service not only aligns with global best practices but also supports the Kingdom's vision of enhancing the quality of its service industries and fostering competitive business practices.

Research problem

1. **How emotional intelligence affects customer interactions:** Analyzing how the emotional intelligence of after-sales personnel influences their ability to engage with customers, handle complaints effectively, and deliver satisfactory service experiences.
2. **The link between emotional intelligence and employee performance:** Investigating the extent to which EQ contributes to job satisfaction, stress management, and collaboration among HAVAL's after-sales team, which directly impacts service quality.
3. **Identifying EQ competencies critical for service excellence:** Pinpointing the specific EQ competencies that most significantly contribute to successful customer interactions, such as empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal communication skills, to provide actionable insights for HAVAL's employee training and development.

This research problem highlights the gap in existing studies concerning the integration of EQ in the automotive after-sales sector and its potential benefits for improving service quality and fostering a customer-centric culture. By addressing this gap, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between EQ and after-sales service outcomes, offering practical recommendations for HAVAL to enhance its service practices.

Importance of the Research

This research carries significant importance for HAVAL and the broader automotive industry in Saudi Arabia for several reasons:

Scientific Significance

1. **Addressing Research Gaps in Emotional Intelligence in the Automotive After-Sales Sector:** This research contributes to academic knowledge on emotional intelligence and its role in customer interactions, particularly in the automotive after-sales sector. It offers a new dimension to the academic literature by providing empirical evidence on the impact of emotional intelligence on service quality in the Saudi context, which could serve as a valuable reference for researchers focused on service and emotional intelligence.
2. **Supporting the Development of Academic Literature on Customer Service and Emotional Intelligence in Emerging Markets:** This research offers findings that address research gaps regarding the application of emotional intelligence in emerging markets like Saudi Arabia. It encourages further studies in related sectors, thus building a useful knowledge base for examining how emerging markets interact with and employ emotional intelligence to enhance service quality.
3. **Highlighting Critical Emotional Intelligence Competencies for Successful After-Sales Service:** The research identifies essential emotional competencies that improve employee-customer interactions. These findings support theories on emotional intelligence and its importance in customer-oriented work environments, potentially serving as a foundation for future theories and applications of emotional intelligence across various fields.

Practical Significance

1. **Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty:** By examining the impact of emotional intelligence on customer interactions, this research offers practical recommendations on improving customer satisfaction and loyalty. After-sales service plays a key role in building sustainable customer relationships, and the findings help provide targeted guidance on enhancing these interactions to deliver satisfying service experiences, which could support HAVAL's competitive differentiation.
2. **Developing the Workforce and Building a Customer-Oriented Service Culture:** The research provides insights into how emotional intelligence can be leveraged to develop

HAVAL's workforce and increase the efficiency of its after-sales service team. It contributes to developing training programs focused on enhancing employees' emotional intelligence, enabling them to better respond to customer needs and foster a cooperative work environment.

3. **Aligning HAVAL's Practices with Saudi Vision 2030 Objectives:** This research aligns with Saudi Vision 2030, which promotes service quality across sectors. By supporting customer service quality, the study helps HAVAL align with national goals that emphasize the development of advanced services and high-quality service standards, thus supporting the Kingdom's transition towards a diversified and sustainable economy.
4. **Providing Practical Recommendations for Emotional Intelligence Training and Skill Development:** This research offers practical guidance on the emotional competencies that should be emphasized in hiring and training the after-sales team. This helps HAVAL design customized training programs and achieve well-planned professional development that contributes to tangible improvements in the quality of service provided to customers.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence (EQ) on the performance and effectiveness of after-sales service employees at HAVAL Company in Saudi Arabia.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Assess how emotional intelligence influences the quality of customer interactions within the after-sales service at HAVAL.
2. Evaluate the effect of emotional intelligence on job performance and job satisfaction of HAVAL's after-sales employees.
3. Identify the key emotional intelligence competencies that are most critical for successful customer interactions in the automotive after-sales industry.
4. Provide practical recommendations for HAVAL to incorporate emotional intelligence training and development into their after-sales service strategy.

By achieving these objectives, the study aims to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence in enhancing customer satisfaction and service quality in the automotive sector.

Research Questions

To accomplish these objectives, the study is guided by a main research question and several sub-questions that explore specific aspects of the relationship between emotional intelligence and after-sales service performance.

Main Research Question

- **How does emotional intelligence impact the performance of after-sales service employees and customer satisfaction at HAVAL Company in Saudi Arabia?**

Sub-Questions

1. **How does emotional intelligence influence the way after-sales employees interact with customers?**
 - This question seeks to understand how EQ skills, such as empathy and self-regulation, affect communication, problem-solving, and the ability to address customer concerns effectively in service settings.
2. **What role does emotional intelligence play in enhancing job satisfaction and performance among HAVAL's after-sales service employees?**
 - This question aims to explore the impact of EQ on employee motivation, stress management, and collaboration within the after-sales team, which in turn affects service quality.
3. **Which specific emotional intelligence competencies (e.g., empathy, self-regulation, interpersonal skills) are most critical for achieving success in customer interactions in the after-sales department?**
 - This question helps pinpoint the particular EQ competencies that make the most difference in positive customer experiences, allowing for targeted development initiatives.

4. What practical strategies can be recommended for incorporating emotional intelligence training and development into HAVAL's after-sales service framework?

- This question focuses on providing actionable insights for HAVAL to design training programs that effectively enhance emotional intelligence skills, ultimately improving overall service performance.

By answering these questions, the research will offer a comprehensive understanding of the role of emotional intelligence in after-sales service at HAVAL, contributing valuable knowledge for both the company and the broader automotive industry in Saudi Arabia.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the study's objectives and questions, the following hypotheses have been developed to test the relationship between emotional intelligence and after-sales performance at HAVAL:

1. **H1:** Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the quality of customer interactions in HAVAL's after-sales department.
2. **H2:** Emotional intelligence is positively associated with job satisfaction among HAVAL's after-sales employees.
3. **H3:** Emotional intelligence competencies (e.g., empathy, self-regulation, interpersonal skills) significantly contribute to customer satisfaction in the automotive after-sales sector.
4. **H4:** Implementing emotional intelligence training in HAVAL's after-sales service department will improve service quality and customer satisfaction.
5. **H5:** Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to achieve higher job performance in after-sales roles at HAVAL.

These hypotheses will guide the study in examining how emotional intelligence influences employee effectiveness and customer satisfaction, with a particular focus on the automotive after-sales sector at HAVAL in Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

This literature review examines the role of emotional intelligence (EQ) in enhancing employee performance, customer satisfaction, and service quality in the automotive after-sales industry. Emotional intelligence, particularly in customer-facing roles, has garnered significant academic and practical interest, as it impacts communication, job satisfaction, customer interactions, and overall sales performance. By analyzing relevant studies, this review explores how EQ can enhance service delivery in automotive after-sales departments, focusing on its role in employee behavior, customer retention, and overall business success.

Emotional Intelligence and Sales Performance

Emotional intelligence has shown a substantial impact on sales performance across industries. AlDosiry, Alkhadher, AlAqraa, and Anderson (2016) investigated the relationship between EQ and sales performance in Kuwait, finding that EQ components such as self-regulation, empathy, and motivation were significantly correlated with higher sales performance in customer-oriented roles. In Kuwait's automotive industry, sales professionals who scored high in EQ were better equipped to manage customer expectations and build rapport, resulting in improved sales metrics. This research suggests that, in the automotive after-sales sector, emotional intelligence can be a critical asset for enhancing customer service quality and meeting customer needs effectively.

Additionally, Anderson et al. (2015) emphasize the predictive capacity of EQ in the workplace, highlighting its role in facilitating smoother interactions with clients. Employees with strong EQ skills, such as social awareness and emotional regulation, exhibit an ability to better understand and respond to customer concerns, thus increasing customer satisfaction. This finding is pertinent to the automotive after-sales industry, where understanding customer frustrations and expectations can lead to more effective problem resolution and higher satisfaction levels.

Emotional Intelligence in the Automotive Industry

The automotive industry, particularly the sales sector, often experiences high employee turnover due to the demanding nature of the job and the dynamic customer base. Clarke (2020) explored the use of emotional intelligence to mitigate employee turnover during leadership transitions in automotive sales. The study found that leaders who displayed high EQ were better at maintaining employee morale,

reducing turnover, and supporting staff through challenging transitions. The findings suggest that when leaders and frontline employees possess emotional intelligence, the entire after-sales service department can maintain stability and improve customer experiences, as emotional intelligence aids in stress management and workplace adaptability.

Clarke's (2020) study also indicates that EQ can be an essential quality in leaders to foster a positive workplace environment, especially when high performance is expected in customer interactions. In the context of automotive after-sales, emotionally intelligent leaders are better able to create a supportive work environment that enhances employee retention and encourages employees to provide excellent customer service, thereby benefiting the company overall.

Emotional Intelligence and Customer Interactions

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in managing customer interactions, particularly in after-sales environments where customers might be facing issues or need further support. Kidwell, Hardesty, Murtha, and Sheng (2011) found that emotional intelligence enhances marketing exchanges, enabling sales staff to handle customer emotions skillfully, especially during complaints or disputes. The ability to empathize and actively listen to customers' concerns was found to be critical in providing resolutions that met customer satisfaction. This study underscores the importance of training employees to develop EQ skills, particularly in high-contact environments like automotive after-sales services, where such skills can lead to improved customer loyalty and repeat business.

Moreover, Li and Lai (2021) conducted research on service quality and customer repurchase intentions in the automotive aftermarket. They used statistical methods and artificial intelligence to analyze how service quality impacts customer loyalty and retention, emphasizing that customer satisfaction in after-sales services relies heavily on empathy, communication, and prompt problem-solving—all core aspects of emotional intelligence. Their findings suggest that companies aiming to boost repurchase rates should invest in EQ training for their after-sales staff, as it has a direct influence on service quality and, consequently, customer loyalty.

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction and Performance

Job satisfaction in the automotive after-sales sector is often influenced by the level of emotional intelligence within the workforce. Vazifehdust and Abedini (2018) examined the impact of EQ on sales

experts in the automotive sector in Iran, specifically in Bahman Leasing Co. They found that employees with higher EQ were more satisfied with their jobs, which translated to improved customer service and sales performance. This suggests that EQ not only enhances job satisfaction but also boosts performance levels, as employees who manage their emotions effectively can better cope with the demands of after-sales roles. The study also highlights that organizations can benefit from integrating EQ assessments in their hiring and training processes to ensure employees have the necessary competencies to manage challenging customer interactions effectively.

Singh (2023) further explored service quality and operations within India's automotive after-sales market, finding that employees' emotional regulation and interpersonal skills positively impacted both job satisfaction and customer service. This study reinforces the value of emotional intelligence in environments that require high interaction with customers and highlights how improving EQ among employees can be a critical strategy for enhancing job satisfaction and performance.

Emotional Intelligence and Customer Satisfaction in After-Sales Service

Customer satisfaction in the automotive after-sales sector can be significantly influenced by the emotional intelligence of service personnel. Fathulloh and Purnama (2024) used the SERVQUAL model to assess customer satisfaction in automotive after-sales service, emphasizing that responsiveness and empathy were the key determinants of customer satisfaction. Since these qualities align with emotional intelligence components, the study concludes that investing in EQ development for service employees could enhance their responsiveness to customer needs, thereby improving overall satisfaction. This finding is relevant for companies like HAVAL, where after-sales satisfaction can foster customer loyalty and positively impact the company's brand image in a competitive market.

Furthermore, Abdullah (2023) examined the effect of after-sale services on customer satisfaction and loyalty at Cimcorp, an automation company, highlighting that emotionally intelligent interactions during after-sales processes were instrumental in building long-term customer relationships. Abdullah's research aligns with the idea that emotionally intelligent employees can contribute to better customer experiences, ultimately fostering customer loyalty. In automotive after-sales services, where customers frequently seek assistance post-purchase, having staff trained in emotional intelligence can differentiate a company by creating positive, trust-building interactions.

Emotional Intelligence in Emerging Markets and Cultural Contexts

The study of emotional intelligence within specific cultural contexts, particularly in emerging markets like Saudi Arabia, is essential for understanding its impact on customer satisfaction and business success. AlDosiry et al. (2016) found that cultural nuances influenced how EQ affected sales performance in Kuwait, highlighting that employees' ability to empathize and relate to customers within their cultural framework enhanced their sales effectiveness. This finding is crucial for Saudi Arabia's automotive sector, where cultural values may shape customer expectations and interactions. By considering these cultural factors, HAVAL and similar companies can develop EQ training that resonates with the local workforce, thereby enhancing its effectiveness.

The study by Anderson et al. (2015) similarly supports the idea that understanding cultural expectations is key to implementing EQ effectively in customer service. In emerging markets, customers often expect a personal, empathetic approach, especially in high-value transactions like automotive sales and after-sales services. Thus, emotional intelligence tailored to cultural contexts can be a valuable asset for companies seeking to differentiate their customer service and foster loyalty in competitive environments.

Summary of Findings and Implications for the Automotive After-Sales Industry

The reviewed literature consistently supports the positive impact of emotional intelligence on sales performance, customer satisfaction, employee job satisfaction, and customer retention in the automotive after-sales sector. EQ competencies—such as empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills—are essential for managing customer interactions and addressing customer needs, which can lead to increased satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, studies indicate that EQ is particularly beneficial in high-contact, service-oriented industries, making it highly relevant to the automotive after-sales market.

The literature also underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in implementing EQ training programs, particularly in emerging markets like Saudi Arabia. Companies that tailor EQ development to local cultural norms and customer expectations are better positioned to enhance service quality and customer relationships. For HAVAL, this means that adopting EQ training and development programs, while being mindful of cultural expectations, can lead to significant improvements in customer satisfaction and business outcomes in the Saudi market.

The reviewed studies reveal that emotional intelligence is an invaluable asset in the automotive after-sales sector, enhancing employee-customer interactions, job satisfaction, and customer loyalty. By fostering EQ among after-sales personnel, HAVAL can expect to see improvements in service quality and customer satisfaction, essential for building a competitive edge in Saudi Arabia's growing automotive market. The research provides a foundation for future studies on integrating EQ into organizational practices, emphasizing its role as a critical component in successful customer service and employee performance in after-sales environments.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The theoretical foundations for exploring the impact of emotional intelligence in the automotive after-sales sector at HAVAL in Saudi Arabia are drawn from several prominent theories and frameworks. These foundations establish a basis for understanding how emotional intelligence (EQ) influences employee performance, customer satisfaction, and business outcomes. The following are the primary theoretical frameworks that inform the study:

1. Emotional Intelligence Theory

Emotional intelligence theory, first popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995), serves as the main theoretical basis for this study. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions, as well as the emotions of others. According to Goleman's model, EQ consists of five main components:

- **Self-Awareness:** The capacity to recognize one's emotions and their effects.
- **Self-Regulation:** The ability to manage and control emotions constructively.
- **Motivation:** An internal drive to achieve and improve.
- **Empathy:** The capacity to understand others' emotions and perspectives.
- **Social Skills:** Proficiency in managing relationships and building networks.

In the context of customer service, such as after-sales services, high EQ levels are essential because employees frequently interact with customers who may face issues or have concerns. Employees with strong EQ skills can manage these interactions with empathy and professionalism, leading to enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, Goleman's emotional intelligence theory helps explain how EQ skills in HAVAL's after-sales team can improve service quality and customer relations (Petrides, 2010).

2. Service Quality Theory

The concept of service quality, often measured by the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), is also central to this study. The SERVQUAL model identifies five main dimensions of service quality:

- **Reliability:** The ability to perform the promised service accurately and dependably.
- **Assurance:** Employees' knowledge, courtesy, and ability to instill trust and confidence.
- **Tangibles:** The appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.
- **Empathy:** The ability to provide individualized attention to customers.
- **Responsiveness:** The willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

In after-sales services, such as those provided by HAVAL, the quality of service directly impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. Emotional intelligence contributes to enhancing several of these dimensions—particularly empathy, assurance, and responsiveness. This theoretical framework is relevant to this study, as it highlights the ways in which emotional intelligence can be applied to meet customer expectations and improve overall service quality in after-sales interactions (Sumrit, & Sowijit, 2023).

3. Customer Satisfaction Theory

Customer satisfaction theory examines how customers' expectations and perceptions align to influence their satisfaction with a service or product. Oliver's Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (1980) is widely used in studying customer satisfaction. According to this theory, satisfaction results from the comparison between customers' expectations and their actual experience:

- **Positive Disconfirmation:** When the actual experience exceeds expectations, resulting in satisfaction.
- **Negative Disconfirmation:** When the actual experience falls short of expectations, leading to dissatisfaction.
- **Confirmation:** When the experience meets expectations, resulting in neutral satisfaction.

This theory is pertinent to understanding the role of emotional intelligence in customer satisfaction. For example, after-sales employees with high EQ are better equipped to empathize with customers, handle complaints effectively, and resolve issues satisfactorily, which can exceed customers' expectations and lead to positive disconfirmation and satisfaction. In this context, customer satisfaction theory provides

a basis for examining how EQ in HAVAL's after-sales team can contribute to higher levels of customer satisfaction(Nadya, 2020).

4. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET), proposed by Blau (1964), suggests that human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis. According to this theory, interactions between individuals or organizations are based on mutual expectations and exchanges. In a business setting, customers expect reliable, efficient, and empathetic service in exchange for their loyalty and continued business.

Within the context of after-sales services, social exchange theory explains how positive interactions—facilitated by emotionally intelligent staff—lead to stronger customer relationships. When employees show empathy, understanding, and patience in after-sales interactions, customers are likely to reciprocate with loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. Therefore, SET provides insights into the importance of emotional intelligence in building trust and establishing strong relationships with customers, contributing to the long-term success of HAVAL's after-sales services(Stafford& Kuiper, 2021).

5. Organizational Behavior and Job Satisfaction Theories

Organizational behavior theories, particularly those related to job satisfaction, provide insights into how emotional intelligence affects employee motivation, commitment, and performance. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), for instance, categorizes factors that contribute to employee satisfaction into **hygiene factors** (such as working conditions and salary) and **motivational factors** (such as recognition and responsibility).

Emotional intelligence directly impacts several motivational factors, including interpersonal relationships and professional development. Employees with higher EQ are generally more resilient, adaptable, and motivated, which leads to increased job satisfaction. In the automotive after-sales sector, where employees face challenging customer interactions, emotional intelligence helps mitigate stress and fosters a more positive, productive work environment. This theory helps explain why emotionally intelligent employees in HAVAL's after-sales department may experience higher job satisfaction and be more effective in their roles(Thant, & Chang, 2021).

6. Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, introduced by Freeman (1984), asserts that organizations should create value for all stakeholders, not just shareholders. Stakeholders include customers, employees, suppliers, and the community. In the context of after-sales services, stakeholder theory suggests that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to meet the needs of various stakeholders through effective communication and empathy.

For HAVAL, adopting an emotionally intelligent approach to after-sales service benefits both internal and external stakeholders. Internally, employees experience a more supportive work environment, while externally, customers enjoy a higher quality of service. This dual approach helps HAVAL build a positive reputation, increase customer satisfaction, and ultimately enhance brand loyalty (McGahan, 2021).

7. Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1980) examines how cultural values impact behavior within organizations. Given that this study is set in Saudi Arabia, where cultural values strongly influence interpersonal and organizational interactions, this theory helps explain how emotional intelligence can be applied in culturally appropriate ways.

In Saudi Arabia, where collectivism, respect for authority, and interpersonal harmony are valued, emotionally intelligent employees can navigate cultural nuances in customer interactions effectively. For example, empathy and respectful communication are critical for customer satisfaction in the Saudi context. By integrating Hofstede's theory, the study can address how cultural factors shape customer expectations and the role of EQ in meeting these expectations within HAVAL's after-sales services loyalty (McGahan, 2021).

The theoretical foundations of this study encompass multiple theories that provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotional intelligence affects the automotive after-sales sector at HAVAL in Saudi Arabia. Emotional Intelligence Theory underpins the study's focus, explaining how EQ influences employee interactions with customers. Service Quality Theory and Customer Satisfaction Theory highlight how EQ contributes to improved service standards and customer experiences, respectively. Social Exchange Theory emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between emotionally intelligent interactions and customer loyalty. Organizational Behavior theories explain the role of EQ in fostering job satisfaction and motivation, while Stakeholder Theory reinforces the value of EQ in creating positive outcomes for all stakeholders. Finally, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory provides insights into how emotional intelligence can be effectively applied in a Saudi cultural context.

Together, these theoretical frameworks inform the study's exploration of EQ in after-sales services at HAVAL, illustrating its potential impact on employee performance, customer satisfaction, and long-term business success.

Methodology and Research Method

This study adopts a **descriptive-analytical methodology**, which is appropriate for exploring the impact of emotional intelligence on after-sales services in the automotive industry, particularly at HAVAL in Saudi Arabia. A descriptive-analytical approach enables the researcher to systematically describe, analyze, and interpret data to gain insights into how emotional intelligence affects service quality, employee performance, and customer satisfaction.

The **descriptive aspect** of the methodology allows for gathering detailed information on employees' levels of emotional intelligence, customer interactions, and job satisfaction. In contrast, the **analytical aspect** provides a framework for examining correlations and relationships among these variables.

Research Method

The research utilizes a **quantitative method** through the distribution of a structured questionnaire, which is well-suited to gathering numerical data and performing statistical analyses. Quantitative data enables a clear, objective examination of how different dimensions of emotional intelligence relate to employee performance and customer satisfaction in after-sales services.

The questionnaire will target employees within HAVAL's after-sales department, aiming to assess their emotional intelligence and evaluate its impact on their interactions with customers. By collecting responses from a larger sample, the study can yield statistically significant findings that accurately reflect the role of emotional intelligence in HAVAL's after-sales context.

Research Tools

The primary research tool is a **structured questionnaire** developed based on existing scales for measuring emotional intelligence and service quality. The questionnaire will consist of multiple sections to capture various aspects of emotional intelligence, as well as questions focused on service quality, job satisfaction, and customer interaction quality. The questionnaire structure includes:

1. **Demographic Section:** Collects basic information about the participants, such as age, gender, job role, and years of experience.
2. **Emotional Intelligence Scale:** This section utilizes a validated emotional intelligence scale, such as the **Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS)** or **Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)**. Questions will be divided into key dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.
3. **Service Quality Section:** This section contains questions based on the **SERVQUAL model** to evaluate the quality of after-sales service provided, focusing on reliability, assurance, empathy, responsiveness, and tangibles.
4. **Job Satisfaction and Performance Indicators:** This section includes questions to gauge job satisfaction and measure employee perceptions of their own performance and customer satisfaction levels.

The questionnaire will use a **5-point Likert scale** for most items, with responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The use of a Likert scale allows for precise measurement of employee attitudes and perceptions, facilitating statistical analysis.

The questionnaire will be pre-tested through a **pilot study** to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity. Necessary adjustments will be made based on feedback received from the pilot group.

Research Community

The research community for this study comprises **employees working in HAVAL’s after-sales department** in Saudi Arabia. This includes customer service representatives, technical staff, and supervisors who directly interact with customers during after-sales service. These employees were chosen because of their direct involvement in customer interactions, making them ideal participants to assess how emotional intelligence affects service delivery and customer satisfaction.

The study will aim to include a diverse sample in terms of age, years of experience, and job roles to capture a comprehensive perspective on emotional intelligence across different levels within the after-sales department. The expected sample size will be determined based on the total number of employees in the department, aiming to achieve a response rate sufficient for statistically significant analysis.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection will be conducted through **online or paper-based questionnaires**, depending on accessibility for the respondents. The questionnaires will be distributed to the research community with clear instructions for completion and assurance of confidentiality.

Once collected, the data will undergo **descriptive and inferential statistical analysis**. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation) will provide an overview of the respondents' characteristics and responses. Inferential analysis, such as correlation and regression analysis, will be used to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence dimensions and performance indicators, allowing the study to address the research questions and hypotheses effectively.

Study Limitations

1. **Sample Size and Generalizability:** The research is limited to employees in the after-sales department of HAVAL in Saudi Arabia. While the findings will be insightful for this context, they may not fully represent the automotive after-sales sector in other companies or regions.
2. **Self-Reported Data:** Since the study relies on self-reported questionnaire responses, there is a potential for response bias. Employees might overestimate or underestimate their levels of emotional intelligence or job performance due to social desirability bias or personal perceptions, which may impact the accuracy of the data.
3. **Cultural Influences:** The study takes place in Saudi Arabia, where cultural norms may shape perceptions of emotional intelligence and customer service behaviors differently from other regions. These cultural factors could influence employees' responses and interpretations of emotional intelligence, potentially limiting the applicability of the results to regions with different cultural values.
4. **Cross-Sectional Design:** This study uses a cross-sectional design, gathering data at one point in time. While this approach offers a snapshot of the current situation, it limits the ability to examine long-term impacts of emotional intelligence on after-sales performance or to observe changes over time. A longitudinal study could provide deeper insights into how emotional intelligence impacts customer service performance over a more extended period.
5. **Scope of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions:** Emotional intelligence is a complex construct with multiple dimensions. Although the study incorporates key dimensions like self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy, other nuanced aspects may not be fully captured. This limitation might affect the comprehensiveness of the emotional intelligence assessment and its link to after-sales performance outcomes.
6. **Lack of External Factors Consideration:** External factors such as economic conditions, organizational policies, and industry-specific challenges can also affect after-sales service quality and employee performance. This study focuses specifically on emotional intelligence and may not fully consider the impact of these external variables, which could influence the results.
7. **Time Constraints:** Conducting a thorough study with a robust sample size and in-depth analysis can be time-intensive. Time constraints may impact data collection, analysis depth, or

follow-up with respondents, potentially affecting the study's thoroughness and the breadth of conclusions that can be drawn.

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عنوان البحث

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