ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper is to evaluate the service recovery strategy in the cellular industry of Pakistan. The switching of customers from one cellular company to another is common which is shown low satisfaction due to some gap of effective service recovery. Effective service recovery keeps the customer loyal if it is properly implemented after the service failure especially in the service industry. The earlier literature of 2015 study reveals and proved the effective role of service recovery strategies in Cellular Industry of Egypt. The research conducted in the Cellular Industry of Pakistan as such kinds of research does not conduct in Pakistan with a broad spectrum of service recovery. This could lead to effective service recovery strategies for retention of customers. Keeping the service recovery theory this research used service recovery strategies adopted a model from an earlier study in the cellular industry of Pakistan through Convenient Survey of 99 customers of Sukkur & Larkana Divisions of mobile companies. The quantitative method and the five liker scale used from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The SPSS 18 is used for data Reliability, Factor Analysis, correlation analysis, ANNOVA and Multiple regressions. The 41 items of variables used of service recovery dimensions like an apology, compensation, Explanations, Follow-up, Facilitation, Speed of Response, Courtesy, Efforts, Response, Problem Solving and repurchase intentions. The customer recovery scale proved the high reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha 0.968), acceptable ratio factor analysis (Above 5 & 6 value in KMO Test & above 1 in Eigen Value), correlations (lower the value 0.7 or 0.6) and ANNOVA (significance value 0.00). The results showed that apology, facilitations, the speed of response, efforts and problems solving are very important aspects that have an impact on customer repurchase intentions with service recovery. This index is potential value for establishing a link between customer repurchase intention and customer service recovery strategy which can contribute to the retention of the client with the company in long term. The manager must focus on immediate complaint resolution system to retain their clients. This study is comprehensive and not done in Pakistan at such scale level and can contribute to effective service recovery. This research was limited in the area because only Sukkur and Larkana Divisions were focused on gathering data, due to time constraint the data
was gathered from only 99 respondents only. This research focused on nine dimensions of service recovery while there are many others.

**Keywords:** Service Recovery, Purchase Intentions, Customers, Cellular Industry, Pakistan

**INTRODUCTION**

In the competitive environment, all organizations made efforts to serve error free to their customer’s especially in the service industry to maintain long-term relationships but service failure is inevitable due to human errors (Zeithaml, 2006). These errors cannot ignore as it affects the relationship with the customer loyalty. The main reason of service failure is the gap between service delivered and customers’ satisfaction (Andreassen, 2000). There can exist many types of service failure some of them are given below:

- Service failure may be unavailability of service, core service failure or very gentle service rendering process,
- Failure of employees’ to fulfill customers’ needs or requests, and
- Behavior of employees unexpected such as ignoring the customers (Bitner, 1990)

To avoid the consequences of service failure the companies have a remedial process called services recovery process which starts from the moment of service failure. It may take three months to lose up to 25 percent of profit by a firm in service sector if service recovery is not handled successfully (Fisher Jordan, 2007). The main reason of service recovery process to keep the existing client attachment with the company as the new customer may more cost of acquisition than retention of existing customer. Once the service failure is recognized the firm needs to immediately implement the effective service recovery. Failure to do so can be the reason of losing its customers (Keaveney, 1995).

Service failure can be defined as multiple faults occur during the service delivery. Service failure can be due to non-available of the service provider, lengthy waiting time, companying software error etc. In order to retain its customers, the service failure must be followed by service recovery process (Swanson, 2001). This means every service provider must develop a service recovery process to correct service delivery slips by implementing the specific service recovery successfully. Services recovery processes in which firm provides additional services to the customer for compensate the problem and a complaint that occurred due to service failure (Grönroos, 1988).
The most important aspect of service recovery is to understand the course of action and strategy of the company to implement at the time of service failure. These strategies may lead to the success of service recovery such as quick response the customer complaints by ensuring the customer that specific action must be taken in order to resolve the problem within a particular period of time. The different company used a different strategy for service recovery process as some use apology and compensation and other use strategy of explaining the customer regarding failure and through constant follow-up. Understand the complete features of service recovery action are also important which must be well understood by the employees in term of what to do if service failure occurs. Most of the times companies used temporarily course of action to response the service failure which may not part of complete service recovery strategy but these could not be effective. The use of another effective service recovery may less expensive but more fruitful and productive in long run of the company.

To avoid weak operational strategy for service recovery, this study empirically investigate the impact of service recovery on the customer repurchase intentions based on argument that service failure dissatisfies the customer. In order to avoid the customer dissatisfaction, firm use proper service recovery which in turn restore the sense of satisfaction in customer as a result firm can enhance its trustworthiness which help in winning the customer loyalty and can positively affect the repurchase intention of customers. This study develops a comprehensive, valid and reliable scale that use in case of service failure by the company. Those comprise an action to overall service recovery strategy and proposed an index of service recovery strategy consist of nine courses of action; apology, compensation, explanation, follow-up, facilitation, the speed of response, courtesy, efforts and problem-solving. The purpose of this service recovery process to enlist, implement and emphasizing the course of action for customer repurchase intention. Some of them are a most effective strategy which can use for effective service recovery process in the long run of the company.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study will be helpful to the mobile companies operating in Pakistan especially in upper Sindh which is facing huge multiple kinds of issues of low coverage, signal and slow speed of internet despite the launching of 3G and 4G. This will also provide the feedback and comparison of services recovery tool used by the cellular companies to retain their existing
clientele as switching is very high to the customers. The cellular companies offering the variety of package to the customer to retain but their service recovery strategy is being researched to judge the results of their service recovery process.

The purpose of this research to test the model for describing customer repurchases intentions influenced by service recovery process. This research will reveal the service recovery impact on customers repurchases intention and relationship between the service recovery processes i.e. problem-solving, compensation, courtesy, facilitation, explanation, the speed of response, apology, effort and follow-up with customer repurchase intentions.

OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH
The objective of this research is to investigate the impacts of service recovery on repurchase intention among the customers of the cellular company.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
It is found in research that half of total efforts of service recovery create dissatisfaction in service so service providers implement the complete set of courses of service recovery. The customer got proper service response from the company is more satisfied customer than those who are although satisfied from core services of a firm but are not getting proper response toward their complaints about other services. The service recovery not only increases the satisfaction of customer but also increase customer trust, word of mouth and customer loyalty (Kau, 2006). From the above review, this fact can be revealed that the service recovery strategies in mobile phone companies did not stress specifically in rural and urban areas of Sindh Pakistan especially in Sukkur region. That is why we have selected this region to work out for issues and challenges faced by customers in using mobile services of cellular companies.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Service Recovery: The Service recovery includes all the actions of a company that may take to rectify the failure. In the servicesector, customer crucial reason of switching is due to the failure of service and service recovery (Andreassen, 2000). To prevent from the switching behavior and build a long-term relationship with the customer by the company, it is important to implement the effective service recovery. The firm response to rectify the failure of service is called the process of service recovery (Kelley SW, 1994).
A thorough review of the literature indicates that, problem-solving, the speed of response, facilitation, courtesy, explanation, apology, effort, follow-up and compensation are given in detail to understand the strategy of service recovery.

Hassan, Azhar and Farooq (2014) investigated the impact of service recovery on customer satisfaction in hospitality industry of Pakistan. In their study they used convenience sampling method and limit their sample to 240. The twin cities of Pakistan such as Islamabad and Rawalpindi were selected to collecting the data. The results show significant positive effect of service recovery on customer satisfaction in hospitality industry situated in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Their outcomes also confirm the moderate impact of employees empowerment on service recovery and therefore on the customer satisfaction.

Maxham (2001) assessed the extent to which service recovery has impact on customer satisfaction, one’s inclination to praise service recovery and purchase intention. He found significant positive impact of moderate to high service recovery following a service failure on customer satisfaction positive word of mouth whereas low service recovery has negative impact on above mentioned independent variables. He also confirms high satisfaction in post recovery period as period as compare to at time of service failure.

A comparative study was conducted by (Jahanzaib, Aslam and Ahmed, 2015) to examine the customer satisfaction from banks service in private and public sectors in Lahore city of Pakistan. 200 respondents were selected from different banks in private and public sector banks. The outcome of study verifies that customers of private banks were more satisfied than that of banks in public sector. This also indicate that better service such as in private banks make customer more satisfied and poor service can lead less or no satisfaction such as realized by customers of public sector banks.

Ibok, George and Acha (2012) probe the influence of service paid by microfinance to its customers on customer retention practice. They argue that microfinance banks have been fail in retention the customer because of their marketing services. While analyzing the data collected from 84 respondents and found negative impact of poor job experience on implementing service recovery strategy of microfinance banks and on customer retention.

As extensive literature review reveal that better service recovery by a firm can influence customer satisfaction positively and it in turn positively affects the customer retention and repurchases decision. The
process of review literature will continue in next portion which extensively focus on different dimensions represented by different variables as mentioned next.

VARIABLES, HYPOTHESIS AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Independent Variables

Apology: Apologies are “confessions of responsibility for negative include some expression of repentance” (Liao, 2007). Due to the failure of service the company must fulfill the requirement of apology. An apology means that company accepts its responsibility of service failure and inconvenience felt by customer and company will work towards resolution of complaints of the customer. This is immediate action of the company towards customers to remove the anxiety of customers and reflect empathy and concern of complaining customers. The customers feel satisfaction on the immediate apology from the company if service failure occurs and psychological impact customer’s satisfaction (Boshoff, 1998). Therefore we expect positive effect of apology on the customer repurchase intention.

H1: The Apology has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

Compensation: Compensation can be defined as reward which may be offered / given by firm to their customer due to service failure. These rewards can take the form free min, free internet min, refunds, and coupons (Valenzuela, 2008). The compensation can improve the repurchase intention of customers and important tool for service recovery. For example, free minutes could be offered from weak networks area to retain the customer of the cellular company. (Johnston, 1999). Consistent with above discussion, we expect positive relationship between compensation and repurchase intention.

H2: The Compensation has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

Explanation: It is the process of informing the customers that firm is aware of the problem, accountable for failure and trying its best to solve the issue (Andreassen, 2000; Liao, 2007). Explaining the reasons to customers is crucial because it leads to customer satisfaction, intention to repurchase and positive word of mouth. Further, the explanation is an information providing to customers when a service failure occurs as a reason to control the service environment (Karatepe, 2004).

H3: The Explanation has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

Follow-up: Follow-up is tool that company uses to test if the firm has resolved the customer’s problem satisfactorily or not (Johnston R. a.,
2002). For example, an email or call to customer to ask if the customers is really satisfied from the response of the company to the customers’ complaint. This process of follow-up call or email can help firm in determining the level of satisfaction a customer enjoys (Bell, 1987). Once the level of customer’s satisfaction is determined, firm can analyze it for generating the inputs for improving the service quality.

- **H4:** The Follow-up has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

**Facilitation:** Facilitation reflects “the policies, procedures, and tools that a company has in place to support customer complaints” (Davidow, 2000). This term as facilitation point like a toll-free number, any contact number, email or social network to raise the customer complaint. This has shown the company willingness to resolve the complaints. Facilitation is, therefore, a key variable in a service recovery context, as facilitation contributes positively to customer satisfaction.

- **H5:** The facilitation has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

**THE SPEED OF RESPONSE**

The speed of response refers to the nimbleness with which the firm is responding to customer complaints (Liao, 2007). Once an organization receives a complaint, a prompt response is critical. Studies have reported significant positive impact of promptness on customer’s satisfaction; repurchase intention and word of mouth (Clemmer, 1993). Consistent with finding of previous studies we expect positive correlation between the speeds of response to customer’s complaints and repurchase intention.

- **H6:** The Speed of Response has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

**Courtesy:** Courtesy refers the extent to the service person behave politely, friendly and respectfully while listening the customers’ complaints (Liao, 2007). This can help firms to calm the customers and strengthen the sense of satisfaction. Courteous behaviour can allow the customer to freely discuss the deficiency on firm side in providing the quality service which can help firm to better satisfy the customer through responding to customers’ complaint in the best possible way.

- **H7:** The Courtesy has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

**Effort:** Effort refers to “the amount of energy put into a behavior or series of behaviors” (Davidow, 2000). For instance, a customer who complains because the room he/she had reserved is not ready when he/she arrives at the hotel will be satisfied if the company invests time to sort out the service failure and ensures that the room is ready without delay.
Employees’ effort to resolve the problem of the complainant is vital in a service context, as effort enhances post-recovery satisfaction (Mattila, 2004).

H₈: The Efforts has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

Problem-Solving: Problem solving approach is reactive approach to correct if something not working properly is reported. Successfully solving the customers’ problems make them feel they are getting everything they deserve for and their interaction with staff of the firm was productive and firm’s policies and procedure are appropriate and well-designed for immediately listening and solving the customers complaint and contrary results can be expected if firms fail to solve the customers’ problems (Liao, 2007). By solving the problem, firm create sense that if similar kind of problem is occurring in future, the customers’ complaints will immediately be responded and problems will be solved. (Levesque, 2000). This can help firm to influence the repurchase intention positively.

H₉: The Problem Solving has a positive relation with Repurchase Intention.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Repurchase Intention: The individual’s judgment about buying again a designated service from the same company, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances (Zeithaml V. A., 1996). The researcher presented that the service recovery process also has the direct effect on both intentions to repurchase and intention to recommend or referral of the service provider to their friends (Richard A. Spreng, 1995). The early researcher also stated that high service recovery impacts significant on the repurchase intentions and suggests that customer retention can maintain through effect service recoveries. The high level of service recovery provides customer referral to the company but also increase the confidence in the services (James G, 2001).

In another study, it reveals that ‘Competitive strategies adopted to attract and retain customers’ found always embraced Service Recovery Processes as an effective tool in retaining the existing customers. Various studies have been conducted in the area of customer repurchase intentions and have revealed that effective service recovery is a key strategy to the growth of any organization (Wanyoni, 2011; Wangari, 2007). The recent research also has shown which indicates that variable of service recoveries like an apology, compensation, the speed of response, facilitation, explanation, courtesy, problem-solving, effort and follow-up are an effective organizational response in the communication industry. These dimensions are the perfect way of responding the customer in case
of failure of service and can be prioritized as per situation of the moment. Such study model also advised to create effective problem solution routine for employees and facilitate the customer to resolve the problem in the minimum time by the frontline employees (Rania Mostafa, 2015).

Figure-1: Conceptual Model

As depicted by figure 1 we are interested to see the impact of independent variables on customer repurchase intention.
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy and Technique: This research is quantitative and cross-sectional and therefore research has used survey design for conducting of this study. The purpose of this study to explore the relationship between the company service recovery strategies and customer repurchase intentions. Hence the service recovery strategy is independent variable and a customer repurchase intention is a dependent variable. Customer service recovery has dimensions like apology, compensation, the speed of response, facilitation, explanation, courtesy, problem-solving, effort, and follow-up and positivist philosophy has been used for this study.

Sample Size Selection: The Sample size of this research is a customer of cellular communication services and used non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique which consists of 99 respondents out of 99, hence 100% response ratio. According to Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988), Barrett and Kline (1981) and Aleamoni (1976), number of response (N) of 50 to 400. This also refers by Hatcher (1994) and Gorsuch (1983) minimum subject to item ratio of at least 5:1.

Data Sources: Both Primary and secondary data has been used to conduct this research. Primary data collected from the customers of cellular communication companies of Sukkur and Larkana Divisions and secondary data collected from research journals, papers, articles, newspapers and authentic websites with published data.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire adapted from the research of 2015 conducted in Egypt to assess the same model in Pakistan with 41 items of service recovery process i.e. apology, compensation, the speed of response, facilitation, explanation, courtesy, problem-solving, effort and follow-up with customer repurchase intentions (Annexure ‘A’).

Data Collection & Instruments: The software to the analysis of data is used a statistical package of social science (SPSS v-18) to measure the results. The data was collected from the customer of cellular communication companies and refined accordingly. The measurement of data analysis completed through testing of hypothesis and tested data through reliability test, factor analysis, correlation analysis and multiple regressions.

RESULTS

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

The response from 99 out of 99 customers received hence response rate is 100% and all cases valid and no one excluded from the survey.
The reliability of items checked through Cronbach’s Alpha which ensures the internal consistency of items. The Cronbach’s Alpha value for scale reliability is 0.7 according to Cho Hung (2011). In the current study, the reliability analysis Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient value 0.968 has shown the strong internal consistency of scale shown in the reliability statistics table. The result shown by reliability analysis of 41 items is 0.968 means 41 items are highly reliable and accurate and higher than 0.6 which is recommended a value of Cronbach’s Alpha (Hair et al 2010).

**RELIABILITY STATISTICS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.968</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FACTOR ANALYSIS**

In factor analysis Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. (KMO) Checked and their acceptable level is 0.5 to 0.6 but all the items KMO test are above 0.5 and 0.6 which means all items are acceptable level and accurate. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is acceptable at 0.00 and all the all the items have also Bartlett test at 0.00 level. The Eigenvalue must be equal or more than 1 and all the items have above the 1 value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>KMO Test</th>
<th>Bartlett Test</th>
<th>Eigen Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensations</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facilitation  |  0.677 |  0.00 |  2.55  
Speed of Response |  0.825 |  0.00 |  3.00  
Courtesy |  0.814 |  0.00 |  3.15  
Efforts |  0.804 |  0.00 |  3.29  
Variables | KMO Test | Bartlett Test | Eigen Value  
Problem Solving |  0.824 |  0.00 |  3.14  
Repurchase Intention |  0.788 |  0.00 |  3.07  

**CORRELATION ANALYSIS**

Multi-collinearity occurs when two or more predictors in the model are correlated. To check the correlation or multicollinearity if factors are equal or above 0.9 which means highly correlated and not acceptable. The data showed that all the factors are below 0.9 results hence there is acceptable ration after the test in correlation.
## CORRELATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Compensation</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
<th>Facilitation</th>
<th>Speed of Response</th>
<th>Courtesy</th>
<th>Efforts</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Apology</th>
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<td>.652**</td>
<td>.597**</td>
<td>.462*</td>
<td>.289*</td>
<td>.446*</td>
<td>.459**</td>
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<td>.627**</td>
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<td>.666**</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>.626**</td>
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</table>

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

To check the analysis of variance (ANOVA) of variables acceptable level of significance is 0.05 in management science and result of ANNOVA came 0.00 which prove the 100 of variable significance of independent/Predictors (Constant) which Problem Solving, Compensation, Apology, Courtesy, Explanation, Follow-up, Speed of Response, Facilitation, Efforts and dependent variable of customer repurchase intention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>98</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Problem Solving, Compensation, Apology, Courtesy, Explanation, Follow-up, Speed of Response, Facilitation, Efforts
b. Dependent Variable: Repurchase Intention.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The R-squared is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the regression model. The values of R-squared range from 0 to 1. Small values indicate that the model does not fit the data well. The sample R-squared tends to optimistically estimate how well the models fit the population. Adjusted R-squared attempts to correct R-squared to more closely reflect the goodness of fit of the model in the population. Use R Squared to help you determine which model is best. The R-square 0.49 means model is 49% good and there is also 51% another factor also remains which can contribute to service recovery tools. The significance value is 0.05 of less it means variables are accepted, significant and contributed to the independent variable of repurchase intention.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Standard Beta</th>
<th>T value</th>
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<td>Compensations</td>
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<td>1.572</td>
<td>.119</td>
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<td>Explanation</td>
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<td>.602</td>
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<td>Follow-up</td>
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<td>-.221</td>
<td>.826</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>1.353</td>
<td>.179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speed of Response</td>
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<td>-1.335</td>
<td>.185</td>
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<td>Courtesy</td>
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<td>Efforts</td>
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<td>.030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
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</table>

**IMPLICATION OF RESEARCH**

The service recovery strategy is not being utilized by all the cellular communication industry and their accessibility to the next level mechanism of complaint resolution is not being shared with the customers to address the issue. The research could be an eye opener of the cellular communication industry to expedite the process of effective service recovery mechanism.

**LIMITATION OF RESEARCH**

The limitations an essential part of the study as a researcher is limited budget and time bound. This study needs time constraints and more response can be gathered from the customers of the whole area of Pakistan which could be more fruitful for the researcher.

The data of complaint could not be shared by the companies and could not be focused to share views of angry customers of cellular companies.

The respondent's data did not retrieve properly or without complete understanding due to low interest of the customer in the research.
FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

The research has vast field to work and future researcher can work extensively in this field as cellular communication industry is growing ever with the new technological war of 3G and 4G speed. This service based industry need more future area and could be add in service recovery strategies and a researcher could expand to a new level of research.

CONCLUSION

Service recovery process is an important factor to influence the repurchase intention of Customers especially in cellular industry to increase the retention rate of customers. As per the model of research, nine independent variables were showing a relevancy with the repurchase intention but after applying the statistical applications of all, it came to know that only one variable like efforts significantly contributes/effect on customer repurchase intention. This means as the mobile company made heavy efforts to resolve the complaints as part of service recovery, the repurchase intention of the customer will increase.

The rest of the variable like Apology, Compensation, Courtesy, Explanation, Facilitation, Follow-up, Speed of Response, and problem-solving did not significantly contribute/effect on customer repurchase intention. Many other variables would be there which can affect the repurchase intention of customers which was not discussed/taken place in this research.

REFERENCES


