

**COMPETITIVE AGGRESSIVENESS AND VENTURE EXPANSION OF  
TELECOMMUNICATION IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Competitive aggressiveness was conceptualised through two dimensions: competitive action intensity and competitive threat responsiveness, while venture expansion was measured using subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth. The study addressed two research questions and tested two corresponding null hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was employed, with a population comprising four major telecommunications operators (MTN, Airtel, Globacom, and 9mobile). Using purposive sampling, data were collected via a structured questionnaire from 92 top and middle management staff involved in strategic and competitive decision-making. Data analysis was conducted using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between competitive action intensity and subscriber growth rate ( $r = .691, p < .01$ ), and between competitive threat responsiveness and service portfolio growth ( $r = .678, p < .01$ ). The study concludes that competitive aggressiveness is a critical driver of venture expansion in the telecommunications sector. It is recommended that firms enhance competitive action intensity through frequent and bold market initiatives to increase subscriber growth, while improving competitive threat responsiveness by closely monitoring competitors and responding promptly to new market developments to expand service portfolios.

***Keywords: competitive aggressiveness, competitive action intensity, competitive threat responsiveness, venture expansion, subscriber growth rate, service portfolio growth, telecommunications, Rivers State, Nigeria***

## **Introduction**

The telecommunication industry remains one of the most competitive sectors in emerging economies. In Nigeria, the industry has contributed significantly to national income, employment generation, and digital transformation. The sector is characterised by rapid technological advancement, heavy capital investment, and intense rivalry among operators. Major service providers such as MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile operate in a market where price competition, network expansion, and service innovation determine survival and growth. In such an environment, firms must adopt strong competitive behaviours to defend their market position and expand their operations. One strategic posture that explains such behaviour is competitive aggressiveness.

Competitive aggressiveness refers to the intensity and directness with which a firm challenges its competitors to gain or protect market share (Wales et al., 2021). It reflects deliberate actions taken to outperform rivals through forceful market moves. In strategic management literature, competitive aggressiveness is recognised as a key dimension of entrepreneurial orientation that influences firm growth and market performance (Covin & Wales, 2019; Wales, 2022). For this study, competitive aggressiveness is examined through two major dimensions: intensity of competitive actions and responsiveness to competitive threats.

Intensity of competitive actions refers to the extent to which a firm engages in bold and forceful market moves aimed at outperforming rivals. This includes deliberate price undercutting, frequent promotional campaigns, service upgrades, and aggressive marketing strategies. Firms that display high intensity in competitive actions do not wait passively; rather, they consistently initiate moves designed to weaken competitors and strengthen their own market presence. Research shows that firms that adopt forceful competitive strategies are more likely to achieve superior market outcomes, especially in highly dynamic industries (Kraus et al., 2020).

Responsiveness to competitive threats refers to the speed and strength with which a firm reacts to competitor actions. In the telecommunication industry, this may involve quickly adjusting data plans, introducing counter-offers, or deploying new technologies in response to rival initiatives. A rapid and decisive response helps firms to prevent customer switching and maintain relevance. Competitive dynamics research indicates that firms that respond swiftly to threats are better positioned to sustain market share and stimulate growth (Chen et al., 2007; Wales et al., 2021).

While competitive aggressiveness focuses on how firms confront rivals, venture expansion explains how firms grow their operations. Venture expansion refers to the increase in a firm's operational scale, market reach, and service scope over time (Davidsson et al., 2020). In the telecommunication sector, expansion is evident in the extension of network coverage, an increase in subscriber base, and the introduction of new service offerings. This study measures venture expansion using two key indicators: subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth.

Subscriber growth rate represents the percentage increase in the number of active customers over a specific period. In telecommunications, growth in subscribers is a direct

reflection of market penetration and customer acquisition success. A consistent increase in subscriber numbers indicates that the firm is successfully expanding its market presence and attracting new users. Prior studies identify customer growth as one of the most reliable indicators of venture expansion and firm growth (Delmar et al., 2003; Davidsson et al., 2020).

Service portfolio growth refers to the expansion of the range of services offered by a firm. This may include the introduction of broadband services, mobile financial services, enterprise solutions, or advanced technologies such as 5G connectivity. Expanding service offerings enables firms to reach new customer segments and generate additional revenue streams. Strategic management literature recognises diversification and service innovation as central pathways to organisational expansion (Hitt et al., 2020). In the telecommunication industry, service portfolio growth not only reflects expansion but also strengthens competitive positioning.

Rivers State serves as a major commercial centre in Nigeria, with strong demand for digital communication services from businesses, government institutions, and households. The competitive behaviour of telecommunication firms operating in this environment may significantly influence their expansion outcomes. Although prior studies have examined competitive aggressiveness in relation to firm performance (Wales et al., 2021; Lumpkin & Dess, 2021), limited empirical research has specifically linked competitive aggressiveness to venture expansion within the Nigerian telecommunication context. This gap provides the foundation for examining how the intensity of competitive actions and responsiveness to competitive threats influence subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth among telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Venture expansion has become increasingly important for telecommunication firms operating in highly competitive and technology-driven environments. In Nigeria, the telecommunications sector continues to experience intense rivalry, rapid innovation cycles, high infrastructure costs, and constant regulatory adjustments. Operators such as MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile compete aggressively to attract and retain subscribers through price reductions, promotional offers, and service upgrades. Despite these efforts, many telecommunication firms still face challenges in sustaining consistent subscriber growth and expanding their service portfolios, particularly in states with growing commercial activities such as Rivers State. Issues such as fluctuating customer loyalty, uneven network coverage, high operational expenses, and limited penetration into underserved communities continue to hinder steady expansion.

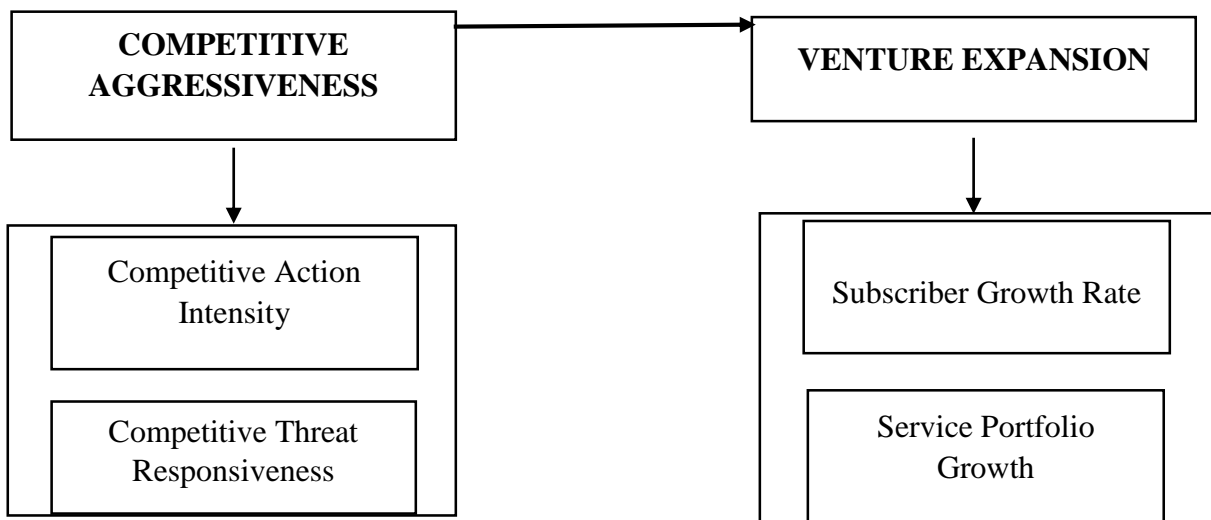
Competitive aggressiveness has been identified in strategic management literature as a behavioural posture that enables firms to challenge competitors directly and protect market position (Wales et al., 2021; Covin & Wales, 2019). Firms that demonstrate a strong intensity of competitive actions through frequent market moves and forceful pricing strategies are expected to gain market share and stimulate growth. Similarly, firms that show high responsiveness to competitive threats by reacting quickly to rival initiatives are more likely to retain customers and prevent market erosion (Chen et al., 2007). However, in practice, it remains unclear whether the aggressive competitive actions undertaken by telecommunication firms in Rivers State actually translate into measurable venture expansion outcomes such as subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth.

Although previous studies have linked competitive aggressiveness to general firm performance and profitability (Lumpkin & Dess, 2021; Wales, 2022), limited empirical attention has been given to its specific influence on venture expansion, particularly within the Nigerian telecommunication industry. Most existing research treats competitive aggressiveness as part of entrepreneurial orientation without isolating its direct contribution to expansion indicators such as customer growth and service diversification. As a result, there is insufficient contextual evidence explaining whether aggressive competitive strategies genuinely drive expansion or merely sustain short-term rivalry.

Furthermore, telecommunication firms in Rivers State operate within a unique socio-economic environment characterised by high business activity, population mobility, and increasing demand for digital services. Despite the presence of aggressive promotional campaigns and continuous service adjustments, expansion into new geographic areas and consistent growth in subscriber base remain uneven. This raises concern about the effectiveness of competitive aggressiveness as a strategic driver of venture expansion in the region.

It is against this background that the present study examines the relationship between competitive aggressiveness, measured through intensity of competitive actions and responsiveness to competitive threats, and venture expansion, measured through subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth, among telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure: 1.1:** A Conceptual framework showing the relationship between the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Source:** Adopted from Salem Al-Harathi et al., (2023); Sheam Arafat et al, (2025).

**Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to:

1. investigate the relationship between Competitive Action Intensity and subscriber growth rate of telecommunication firms in Rivers State;
2. examine the relationship between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and service portfolio growth of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What was the relationship between Competitive Action Intensity and subscriber growth rate of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?
2. How did Competitive Threat Responsiveness relate to service portfolio growth of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There was no significant relationship between Competitive Action Intensity and subscriber growth rate of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

H<sub>02</sub>: There was no significant relationship between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and service portfolio growth of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Concept of Competitive Aggressiveness**

Competitive aggressiveness refers to the degree to which a firm engages in forceful actions to outperform its rivals in the marketplace. It is a core dimension of entrepreneurial orientation, reflecting a firm's willingness to challenge competitors, act boldly, and respond quickly to changes in the environment (Wales et al., 2021). In dynamic industries such as telecommunications, competitive aggressiveness is essential because firms face constant technological innovation, evolving customer needs, and high industry rivalry (Salem Al-Harthi et al., 2023).

The concept encompasses both proactive and reactive behaviours. Proactive actions involve initiating strategic moves such as aggressive pricing, intensive promotional campaigns, and rapid service introductions to shift customer preferences and strengthen market position. Reactive behaviours, on the other hand, involve swift responses to competitor actions to protect market share and sustain customer loyalty (Ahmed et al., 2022). Firms that balance proactive and reactive actions tend to maintain better competitive positioning and are more likely to attract and retain customers (John et al., 2024).

Competitive aggressiveness is strategically significant because it drives performance outcomes. Assertive firms often capture larger market shares, create customer interest through differentiated offerings, and discourage rival entry (Lee & Park, 2021). In telecommunications, assertive competitive postures allow firms to adapt to technology changes, allocate resources effectively, and invest in initiatives that enhance customer value. It also encourages a culture of continuous improvement where departments align to outperform competitors (Smith et al., 2023). However, excessive aggressiveness can lead to risks, including price wars, profit margin erosion, and overstretching of resources (Wales, 2022). Therefore, firms must align aggressive strategies with internal capabilities to achieve sustainable outcomes.

For this study, competitive aggressiveness is examined through two dimensions: Competitive Action Intensity and Competitive Threat Responsiveness. These dimensions reflect the proactive and reactive behaviours that define a firm's competitive stance in the marketplace.

**Competitive Action Intensity:** Competitive Action Intensity refers to the strength, boldness, and frequency of a firm's actions designed to challenge rivals and influence market dynamics. It captures the extent to which a firm actively initiates competitive moves rather than passively reacting to competitors. In telecommunications, this can be seen in frequent revisions of pricing plans, the launch of new data bundles, and the introduction of bundled service offerings to attract subscribers.

Theoretical discussions suggest that firms with high competitive action intensity continuously seek opportunities to outperform rivals by being early movers or innovative in their service offerings (Lopez et al., 2022). Frequent promotional campaigns and pricing strategies serve to attract customers and influence market share. This dimension goes beyond mere competition, reflecting organisational boldness and sustained engagement in aggressive market behaviours. Competitive Action Intensity is shaped by culture and strategic orientation, with firms that reward innovation, risk-taking, and proactivity showing higher levels (Nguyen & Tran, 2021). In the telecommunications sector, intense competition often drives subscriber growth and service portfolio expansion, underscoring the strategic importance of this dimension.

**Competitive Threat Responsiveness:** Competitive Threat Responsiveness reflects how quickly and effectively a firm reacts to competitive threats. Unlike Competitive Action Intensity, which is proactive, this dimension focuses on reactive behaviours aimed at maintaining market position and mitigating the effects of competitors' actions. In telecommunications, it includes rapid deployment of network upgrades, immediate introduction of counteroffers, or restructuring service packages in response to competitors' innovations.

This dimension emphasises agility, strategic awareness, and managerial capability to interpret market signals and respond appropriately (Al-Harhi et al., 2023). Firms that respond quickly to competitive threats can protect their subscriber base, prevent customer churn, and stabilise revenue streams. Timely responses may also create opportunities, as firms can use competitor moves to differentiate services or introduce improved offerings (Martins & Silva, 2024). Together with Competitive Action Intensity, Competitive Threat Responsiveness provides a comprehensive view of competitive aggressiveness, encompassing both proactive and reactive strategies critical for achieving growth and expansion in the telecommunications industry.

### **Concept of Venture Expansion**

Venture expansion refers to the growth of a firm's operations in scale, scope, and reach over time. It reflects how a business increases its market presence, broadens its customer base, and enhances its service offerings. In strategic management literature, venture expansion is seen as a central outcome of effective strategic behaviour because it represents not only survival but also progress toward long-term organisational goals (Davidsson et al., 2020). Telecommunication firms operate in environments where subscriber numbers,

geographic coverage, and service diversification are key indicators of expansion, making venture expansion a fundamental construct for understanding firm growth in this industry. Within dynamic and competitive markets, venture expansion serves as an indicator of a firm's adaptive capacity and strategic effectiveness. Firms that are able to expand demonstrate that they can respond to market demands, absorb competitive pressures, and leverage resources to secure competitive advantage. Venture expansion is often linked to the capacity to innovate services, invest in infrastructure, and attract new customers through value-added offerings (Sheam Arafat et al., 2025). As technology evolves and customer needs diversify, telecommunication firms that broaden their operations to include advanced data services, enterprise communication solutions, and digital innovations are better positioned to sustain growth and remain competitive.

Strategic management studies suggest that venture expansion is both a result and a driver of improved performance. Expansion can lead to economies of scale, increased brand recognition, and higher revenue streams, all of which contribute to organisational stability. In the Nigerian telecommunication sector, expanding into rural and underserved areas has become both a regulatory expectation and a strategic imperative, as firms compete to grow subscriber bases and broaden service coverage. Research shows that venture expansion is not an automatic outcome of competitive behaviours; it requires deliberate investment in networks, targeted marketing strategies, and service diversification to convert competitive actions into measurable growth outcomes (Nguyen & Tran, 2021).

For this study, venture expansion is conceptualised through two measures: subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth. These measures capture the essential indicators of how telecommunication firms extend their reach and scale operations in response to competitive and market pressures.

**Subscriber Growth Rate:** Subscriber growth rate refers to the percentage increase in the number of active users or customers over a defined period and is a commonly used indicator of market expansion. In the telecommunication sector, subscriber growth reflects a firm's success in attracting new customers and retaining existing ones. Firms with higher subscriber growth rates demonstrate an ability to penetrate markets, satisfy customer demands, and outperform competitors in attracting users.

The theoretical importance of subscriber growth stems from its role as a direct measure of market acceptance and organisational reach. In industries where service consumption is driven by affordability, connectivity, and quality, a steadily increasing subscriber base indicates that a firm's offerings resonate with customer needs and preferences. Subscriber growth rate is also linked to network effects, where larger customer bases enhance the perceived value of services, leading to increased adoption (Lee & Park, 2021). Telecommunication firms that prioritise customer acquisition strategies such as competitive pricing, tailored data packages, or expanded coverage often record higher growth rates than those that fail to align offerings with evolving market demands.

Subscriber growth rate is not only a quantitative marker of expansion but also a reflection of competitive positioning. Firms that enjoy rapid subscriber growth frequently secure better bargaining positions with suppliers, achieve higher revenue streams, and attract strategic partnerships that further strengthen their market presence. However, sustainable subscriber growth requires more than aggressive promotional tactics; it necessitates reliable network quality, effective customer service, and innovations that enhance user experience.

Therefore, subscriber growth rate, as a measure of venture expansion, encapsulates both market performance and strategic effectiveness.

**Service Portfolio Growth:** Service portfolio growth refers to the expansion of the range and complexity of services offered by a firm. In the context of telecommunication firms, this includes the introduction of new products or services such as high-speed data plans, value-added services, enterprise communication solutions, mobile financial services, and next-generation technologies like 5G. Service portfolio growth indicates a firm's ability to diversify its offerings to meet the varied needs of customers and secure additional revenue streams. This measure is theoretically grounded in the idea that firms expand not only by increasing customers but also by enhancing what they sell. Service diversification allows firms to address multiple customer segments, reduce dependence on a single revenue source, and strengthen resilience against market volatility (Hitt et al., 2020). In telecommunications, many firms have moved beyond basic voice and SMS services to embrace data-driven products, cloud-based solutions, and digital enterprise platforms, thereby broadening their market reach and expanding overall firm operations. Such diversification aligns with strategic expansion frameworks that posit growth as both horizontal and vertical readiness to serve evolving customer needs.

Service portfolio growth also reflects a firm's innovative capacity. Firms that continuously introduce new services demonstrate responsiveness to technological changes and customer preferences. This adaptability not only strengthens competitive positioning but also enhances long-term sustainability. For example, telecommunication firms that successfully integrate mobile money platforms or digital content services offer customers additional value and secure non-traditional revenue channels, contributing to robust expansion outcomes (Martins & Silva, 2024).

Subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth together provide a comprehensive view of venture expansion in the telecommunications industry. While subscriber growth rate focuses on the broadness of market reach, service portfolio growth highlights the depth and diversity of service offerings. Together, they capture both quantitative and qualitative aspects of how telecommunication firms extend their influence and operations in response to competitive and market dynamics.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) Theory**

The study was anchored on the Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) Theory, which explains how strategic behaviours of firms influence growth, competitiveness, and performance outcomes. EO Theory, popularised by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and extended in subsequent research, identifies key dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour including innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy. These dimensions collectively shape how firms pursue opportunities, respond to rivals, and expand their operations (Wales et al., 2021).

The key assumptions of EO Theory are that firms with strong entrepreneurial orientation are more likely to act proactively in dynamic markets, embrace calculated risks, innovate in products and services, and challenge competitors directly. The theory assumes that such behaviours are embedded in organisational strategy and culture, and that they significantly influence firm growth, market performance, and sustainability (Covin & Wales, 2019).

Specifically, the theory posits that competitive aggressiveness drives firm actions in terms of market rivalry, while proactiveness and innovativeness facilitate venture expansion and service diversification.

EO Theory is relevant to this study because it provides a conceptual lens to examine the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion among telecommunication firms in Rivers State. By framing competitive behaviours as part of entrepreneurial orientation, the theory allows for a structured understanding of how deliberate intensity of market actions (Competitive Action Intensity) and rapid responsiveness to competitors (Competitive Threat Responsiveness) translate into observable outcomes such as subscriber growth and service portfolio expansion (Lumpkin & Dess, 2001; Salem Al-Harhi et al., 2023).

### **Empirical Review**

In a study conducted by Salem Al-Harhi, Johnston, and Al-Zadjali (2023), titled *Competitive Strategies and Market Responsiveness in Telecom Industries*, the researchers sought to examine how competitive strategies influence market outcomes in telecommunications. The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which competitive aggressiveness, particularly through proactive and reactive behaviours, affects customer growth and service diversification. The study adopted a quantitative research design and employed a survey method to collect data from managers and strategic decision-makers in ten leading telecommunications firms operating across Middle Eastern markets. The population of the study comprised 420 senior and middle-level managers, from which a sample size of 210 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across firms and managerial levels. Data were analyzed using multiple regression and correlation techniques to determine the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and market expansion outcomes. The findings revealed that firms exhibiting higher levels of competitive action intensity and responsiveness to competitive threats experienced significantly higher subscriber growth rates and service portfolio expansion compared to less aggressive competitors. The study concluded that competitive aggressiveness is a critical strategic orientation for enhancing venture expansion, particularly in dynamic telecommunications markets. The authors recommended that firms continuously monitor competitor actions, engage in proactive market initiatives, and develop internal capabilities to sustain competitive intensity, thereby ensuring growth in subscriber base and service offerings.

Similarly, Sheam Arafat, Patel, and Ahmed (2025) conducted a study titled *Strategic Firm Growth in Digital Industries: Measuring Expansion Outcomes*, which aimed to investigate the influence of competitive behaviours on venture expansion in digital technology sectors. The study's objective was to examine how competitive action intensity and competitive threat responsiveness affect subscriber growth and service diversification in rapidly evolving markets. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to managers of digital service firms. The population consisted of 350 managers across five major technology sectors, from which a sample of 175 respondents was selected using simple random sampling. Statistical techniques, including regression analysis and structural equation modelling, were used to test the hypothesised relationships. The results indicated that firms with high competitive action intensity achieved substantial subscriber growth by deploying aggressive marketing campaigns, frequent product enhancements, and competitive pricing strategies. Moreover,

firms that demonstrated strong responsiveness to competitive threats successfully expanded their service portfolios by adjusting offerings in reaction to rival initiatives. The study concluded that competitive aggressiveness is a key determinant of venture expansion in digital industries. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that firms in competitive markets should institutionalise agile response systems and maintain high levels of proactive competitive actions to ensure sustained growth and service diversification.

### **Gap in Literature/Knowledge**

Although previous studies have shown that competitive aggressiveness can drive venture expansion in digital and telecom industries (Salem Al-Harhi et al., 2023; Sheam Arafat et al., 2025), there is limited empirical research focused on Nigerian telecommunication firms, particularly in Rivers State. Moreover, existing studies have not clearly examined how the specific dimensions of competitive aggressiveness, Competitive Action Intensity and Competitive Threat Responsiveness, directly influence key measures of venture expansion such as subscriber growth and service portfolio development. This gap underscores the need for research that investigates these relationships in the local context to provide context-specific insights for strategic management.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion among telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population comprised four major telecommunication firms: MTN, Airtel, Globacom, and 9mobile. Purposive sampling was employed to select knowledgeable top and middle management staff who are directly involved in strategic and competitive decision-making within these firms. A total of 100 structured questionnaires were distributed, and 92 were retrieved and deemed valid for analysis.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure Competitive Action Intensity, Competitive Threat Responsiveness, subscriber growth rate, and service portfolio growth. Content validity was confirmed through expert review by lecturers and researchers in strategic management and telecommunications. A pilot test involving ten respondents outside the study area produced a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.86, indicating high reliability of the instrument.

Data were analysed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) with the aid of SPSS version 25. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level to determine the strength and significance of the relationships between competitive aggressiveness dimensions and venture expansion measures. The methodology ensured that the study produced reliable and valid findings relevant to the strategic context of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

### **Results and Discussion**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Competitive Action Intensity and Subscriber Growth Rate of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**Table 4.2: Bivariate Analysis Between Competitive Action Intensity and Subscriber Growth Rate**

	Competitive Intensity	Action Subscriber Rate	Growth
<b>Competitive Intensity</b>	1.000	.691**	
	.	.000	
	92	92	
<b>Subscriber Growth Rate</b>	.691**	1.000	
	.000	.	
	92	92	

There is a strong positive correlation ( $r = .691^{**}$ ) between Competitive Action Intensity and Subscriber Growth Rate, significant at the 0.01 level. The null hypothesis is rejected, showing that firms with higher competitive action intensity experience greater subscriber growth.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and Service Portfolio Growth of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**Table 4.3: Bivariate Analysis Between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and Service Portfolio Growth**

	Competitive Responsiveness	Threat Service Portfolio Growth
<b>Competitive Responsiveness</b>	1.000	.678**
	.	.000
	92	92
<b>Service Portfolio Growth</b>	.678**	1.000
	.000	.
	92	92

A strong positive correlation ( $r = .678^{**}$ ) exists between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and Service Portfolio Growth, significant at the 0.01 level. The null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that faster responses to competitive threats significantly improve service portfolio expansion.

**Relationship Between Competitive Action Intensity and Subscriber Growth Rate**

The finding shows a strong positive correlation ( $r = .691^{**}$ ) between Competitive Action Intensity and Subscriber Growth Rate, significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that telecommunication firms in Rivers State that actively initiate bold and frequent competitive actions, such as aggressive pricing, promotional campaigns, and service launches, are more likely to attract new subscribers and retain existing ones. The result aligns with EO Theory, which suggests that proactive entrepreneurial behaviours enhance market performance and expansion outcomes (Wales et al., 2021). It also supports prior empirical evidence indicating

that assertive competitive strategies drive subscriber growth in dynamic telecom markets (Salem Al-Harthy et al., 2023).

### **Relationship Between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and Service Portfolio Growth**

A strong positive correlation ( $r = .678^{**}$ ) was observed between Competitive Threat Responsiveness and Service Portfolio Growth, significant at the 0.01 level. This implies that firms that quickly and effectively respond to competitors' moves, such as new service introductions or pricing adjustments, are able to expand their service offerings and diversify portfolios. The result reinforces the EO Theory assumption that reactive entrepreneurial behaviours enable firms to adapt and exploit market opportunities for growth. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that responsiveness to market and competitor dynamics enhances venture expansion in digital and telecom industries (Sheam Arafat et al., 2025).

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and venture expansion of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, focusing on Competitive Action Intensity and Competitive Threat Responsiveness as the key dimensions of aggressiveness. The findings revealed that both Competitive Action Intensity and Competitive Threat Responsiveness have significant positive relationships with subscriber growth rate and service portfolio growth. This implies that telecommunication firms that proactively initiate competitive actions and respond quickly to rivals are more likely to attract new subscribers, retain existing ones, and expand their range of services. The study, therefore, concludes that competitive aggressiveness is a critical driver of venture expansion and should be deliberately cultivated to sustain growth and market competitiveness in the telecommunication sector.

### **Recommendations**

1. Telecommunication firms in Rivers State should enhance Competitive Action Intensity by implementing frequent and bold market initiatives, including promotional campaigns, innovative service launches, and strategic pricing, to increase subscriber growth and strengthen market position.
2. Firms should improve Competitive Threat Responsiveness by monitoring competitors closely and responding promptly to new market developments or rival offerings, thereby expanding service portfolios and maintaining a competitive edge.

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