

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT AND TIMELY SERVICE DELIVERY OF ANCILLARY TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN YENAGOA, BAYELSA STATE**Samuel Godgift Izo-ogu****Department of Business Administration****Faculty of Administration and Management****Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria**

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The study was motivated by the increasing challenges of delayed technical support services, poor response time, slow network fault resolution, and inefficient customer service delivery experienced by some ancillary telecommunication firms. Competency assessment was measured using objective criteria and fairness, while timely service delivery was adopted as the dependent variable. The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 50 managers from 50 ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire titled: Competency Assessment and Timely Service Delivery Index (CATSDI). The reliability of the instrument was achieved using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. Out of the administered questionnaires, 46 copies representing 92% were completely retrieved and used for analysis. Spearman Rank Order Correlation was employed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed that objective criteria significantly relate with timely service delivery ($r = 0.699, p < 0.01$), while fairness also significantly relates with timely service delivery ($r = 0.703, p < 0.01$). The study concluded that competency assessment enhances timely service delivery by improving employee performance, operational efficiency, and responsiveness to customer needs. The study recommended that management should establish clear performance standards and ensure fair competency assessment practices to improve service efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Competency assessment, objective criteria, fairness, timely service delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Service delivery is an essential component of business operations because it creates opportunities for organizations to impress customers and demonstrate the value they offer. It also contributes to building strong customer relationships and enhancing customer retention (Thompson, 2023). Nevertheless, these benefits can only be realized when service delivery is timely and efficient. In ancillary telecommunication firms, service delivery is considered a critical operational function because it influences the ability of firms to satisfy customers, maintain network support services, and sustain long-term customer relationships. Ancillary telecommunication firms offer supportive services such as network maintenance, internet support, technical installations, customer care services, data management, and communication infrastructure support to major telecommunication operators. Efficient service delivery within these firms helps to improve customer

satisfaction, strengthen operational reputation, and encourage customer retention (Ovin et al., 2025; Thompson, 2023; Utama et al., 2023). However, these outcomes are only achievable when services are provided promptly and effectively.

Timely service delivery refers to the capacity of an organization to provide telecommunication support services, technical solutions, and customer assistance within the agreed or expected timeframe. In ancillary telecommunication firms, timely service delivery is strongly linked with operational efficiency because delays in technical support, network maintenance, fault repairs, or installation services can adversely affect customer satisfaction and overall business performance (Utama et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2015). Firms that effectively coordinate operations, properly manage technical resources, and maximize workforce efficiency are more capable of meeting service deadlines and maintaining dependable service standards. According to Gunasekaran et al. (2012), operational efficiency improves productivity, minimizes waste, and supports sustainable organizational performance. Among several influencing factors, the achievement of timely service delivery in ancillary telecommunication firms largely depends on the competencies, skills, and knowledge of employees handling technical and customer-related tasks, thereby making competency assessment highly important.

Competency assessment refers to the systematic evaluation of employees' skills, knowledge, abilities, and professional competencies using predetermined standards necessary for effective job performance within an organization. In ancillary telecommunication firms, competency assessment assists management in determining whether technical staff, customer service personnel, and operational employees possess the required expertise to effectively manage telecommunication support services and satisfy customer expectations (Bawono & Arifianto, 2023; Sahay & Kaur, 2021). The Society for Human Resource Management (2020) stated that competency assessment helps organizations identify skill deficiencies and align employee competencies with organizational objectives and service demands. In this study, competency assessment is measured using objective criteria and fairness.

Objective criteria refer to measurable and clearly specified standards used to evaluate employee competence, technical capability, and job performance within particular operational functions. In ancillary telecommunication firms, objective criteria ensure that employees are assessed based on technical competence, problem-solving ability, service efficiency, and operational performance standards. Southerland (2011) explained that objective criteria provide employees with clear expectations and establish a foundation for performance improvement and constructive feedback. Fairness, however, ensures that competency assessment procedures are transparent, unbiased, and equitable for all categories of employees. Within the technologically driven and diverse environment of the telecommunication industry, fair competency assessments are important for promoting employee trust, motivation, and equal opportunities for career advancement (Psico, 2024).

From the foregoing, the need for a study on competency assessment and timely service delivery among ancillary telecommunication firms has become increasingly important in today's competitive and technology-driven business environment (Bawono & Arifianto, 2023; Sahay & Kaur, 2021; Sahay & Kaur, 2021; Ovin et al., 2025). As telecommunication support firms strive to improve customer satisfaction, operational reliability, and service efficiency, understanding the competencies that enhance timely service delivery becomes essential. Timely service delivery not only influences customer confidence and operational

effectiveness but also affects organizational competitiveness and profitability. Consequently, through effective competency assessment, ancillary telecommunication firms can identify skill deficiencies, improve employee performance, and enhance service delivery processes that align with customer expectations and organizational objectives. In line with the above, the research examined the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Statement of the Problem

Despite "the efforts made by the management of ancillary telecommunication firms to improve timely service delivery, some ancillary telecommunication firms still encounter difficulties associated with delays in service delivery during the provision of technical support, network maintenance, internet services, installation activities, and customer support operations. This issue is reflected in poor response time to customer complaints, delays in fixing network faults, slow installation processes, and inefficient turnaround time in managing technical requests. Customers frequently experience delays in receiving responses concerning service interruptions and technical challenges, thereby resulting in dissatisfaction and reducing confidence in the firms' capacity to deliver dependable services. In addition, when the duration required to process requests or restore network services goes beyond expected timelines, operational efficiency decreases and organizational competitiveness is adversely affected. These delays have negative consequences on customer retention, organizational reputation, and service reliability. Consequently, resolving the issue of untimely service delivery has become necessary for ancillary telecommunication firms that aim to enhance operational performance and customer satisfaction. However, among other factors, ineffective timely service delivery appears to be associated with poor competency assessment of employees within these firms. Some firms operate with vague and inefficient competency assessment systems that do not adequately evaluate employees' technical competence and operational abilities. In certain situations, assessment criteria lack clear and measurable standards, leading to poor alignment between employees' competencies and job expectations. This situation creates unfairness in employee evaluation procedures and contributes to inconsistency in service quality across departments. As a result, employees may feel undervalued or uncertain about organizational expectations due to inconsistent assessment practices. These issues negatively influence service delivery speed, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. More importantly, extant literature has not clearly established the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery among ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Conceptual Framework

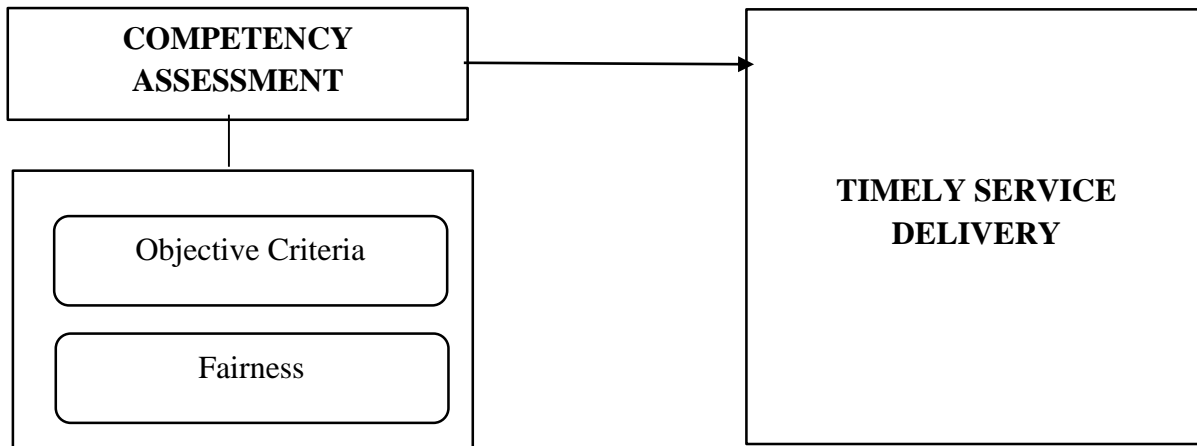


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between Competency Assessment and Timely Service Delivery

Source: Researcher" (2026)

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.
2. examine the relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State?
2. What is the relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Concept of Competency Assessment

Competency "assessment is a structured and systematic process employed to evaluate an individual's skills, knowledge, and abilities against predetermined competencies required for effective performance in a particular role or organization. The process assists organizations in identifying gaps in employees' capabilities while ensuring that talent management strategies are aligned with organizational objectives (Sandhu & Liang, 2021;

Ogbu et al., 2019; Society for Human Resource Management, 2020). Competency assessment involves the appraisal of employees' competencies through different approaches such as self-assessment, peer evaluation, and performance appraisal. This evaluation is essential in talent mapping because it provides valuable insights into employees' strengths and weaknesses, thereby enabling organizations to make informed decisions concerning training, development, and succession planning (Woodruffe, 1997). Competency assessment is further viewed as a systematic approach for identifying and measuring the competencies necessary for effective job performance within an organization. It entails the development of competency models that serve as standards for assessing employee performance and directing professional development initiatives (Shippmann, 2000). In addition, competency assessment is recognized as an important aspect of talent mapping that focuses on systematically identifying the skills and behaviors required for success in specific organizational roles. This process not only supports recruitment activities but also improves employee engagement by aligning employees' career aspirations with organizational requirements.

Competency assessment performs a significant role in talent mapping within organizations by serving as a major foundation for aligning employee capabilities with organizational goals. Through the systematic evaluation of employees' skills, knowledge, and behaviors, organizations are able to identify workforce strengths and weaknesses. This process helps firms recognize high-potential employees while also identifying skill deficiencies that may negatively affect organizational performance (Ogbu, 2019). Competency assessments also provide a well-defined framework for understanding the competencies required for different roles, thereby enabling organizations to design more effective recruitment strategies. Furthermore, integrating competency assessments into talent mapping encourages a culture of continuous learning and development. Employees gain better awareness of their competencies and areas needing improvement, which promotes professional growth and increases job satisfaction. Competency assessments also support succession planning by identifying employees who possess the competencies required to occupy critical future positions. Such a proactive strategy reduces the risks associated with employee turnover and prepares organizations adequately for leadership succession. Moreover, talent mapping supported by competency assessments enables organizations to make data-driven decisions relating to training and development programmes. By identifying competencies that require improvement, organizations can allocate resources effectively and implement targeted training initiatives capable of producing measurable outcomes (Bodnarchuk, 2012). Aligning individual competencies with organizational objectives also enhances employee engagement and retention because employees can clearly identify opportunities for career growth within the organization. In today's highly competitive business environment, the use of competency assessments in talent mapping has become essential for sustaining a competent workforce capable of promoting innovation and achieving strategic organizational goals. In view of the foregoing, the study dimensionalized competency assessment into objective criteria and fairness.

Objective Criteria: Objective criteria in competency assessment refer to measurable and clearly defined standards used to evaluate employees' skills, knowledge, and performance. Objective criteria provide measurable standards for evaluating employees' skills, knowledge, and performance in specific job areas. These criteria help to reduce subjectivity and bias by ensuring that evaluations are based on observable and verifiable evidence rather than personal opinions (Stephen, 1996). Objective criteria may include

performance indicators, technical benchmarks, standardized assessments, and competency frameworks used to determine employee proficiency. The use of objective criteria also promotes transparency, consistency, and fairness in the assessment process, while enabling employees to clearly understand organizational expectations and areas requiring improvement (Bodnarchuk, 2012; Southerland, 2011). Furthermore, objective criteria support accountability, effective feedback, and the development of training programmes aimed at improving employee competence and organizational performance.

Fairness: Fairness in competency assessment refers to the unbiased and equitable evaluation of employees based on clearly defined and consistent standards. Fairness ensures that employee evaluations are transparent, equitable, and consistently applied across all staff members. In diverse organizational environments, fair assessments help employees feel valued and recognized for their contributions, thereby promoting inclusiveness and trust within the workplace (Psico, 2024). Fairness also minimizes bias and subjective judgments by ensuring that employees are assessed using clearly defined standards and procedures. To Sandhu and Liang (2021), organizations can improve fairness by training assessors to recognize unconscious biases and by incorporating diverse perspectives into assessment processes. Furthermore, fair competency assessments enhance employee morale, motivation, and confidence while supporting effective talent management and organizational performance.

Concept of Timely Service Delivery

The "concept of timely service delivery refers to the ability of an organization to provide its products or services to customers within the promised time frame. This concept is not merely about punctuality; it encompasses various aspects of operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and long-term viability (Christopher, 2016; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Timely service delivery is closely linked to operational efficiency. Firms that can streamline their processes, manage their supply chains effectively, and optimize resource allocation are more likely to meet delivery deadlines. This efficiency reduces waste and enhances productivity, which are essential for sustainable operations (Gunasekaran et al., 2012).

In the contemporary competitive market environment, customer expectations concerning service delivery speed have risen considerably. Prompt delivery promotes customer trust and loyalty, which are essential for maintaining long-term business sustainability. When customers obtain their orders at the expected time, they are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the organization to others. The reputation of a firm is largely influenced by its capacity to provide services in a timely manner. Frequent delays may create negative consumer perceptions and adversely affect the company's brand image. Therefore, ensuring timely service delivery enables firms to establish a favourable reputation, which is important for attracting potential customers and retaining existing ones (Năftănăilă et al., 2013; Helo et al., 2017).

Furthermore, timely service delivery is closely associated with sustainability practices within organizations. Sustainable firms usually implement strategies that reduce delays through efficient logistics management, adoption of tracking technologies, and proactive communication with customers regarding the status of their orders. Such practices not only improve service delivery performance but also support environmental sustainability by lowering carbon emissions linked to inefficient logistics operations. Across many industries, timely service delivery represents an important competitive advantage. Firms that perform effectively in this area are able to distinguish themselves from competitors

experiencing delays or inconsistent service quality. As a result, this differentiation can enhance market share and improve profitability over" time.

Theoretical Review

The "study was theoretically anchored on resource based view theory propounded by Jay Barney in his seminal work, particularly his 1991 article titled: Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage. The theory assumes that a firm's competitive advantage is derived from its unique bundle of resources and capabilities, which are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). This perspective posits that not all resources contribute equally to a firm's performance; rather, it is the distinctiveness of certain resources that enables firms to achieve superior outcomes compared to their competitors.

Relevance of Resource Based View Theory to the Study

In ancillary telecommunication firms, competency assessment is essential for identifying and effectively utilizing employees' technical skills, knowledge, and operational capabilities. Employees' competencies significantly affect the quality and timeliness of service delivery, particularly in areas such as network maintenance, technical support, internet services, and customer assistance. By conducting systematic competency assessments, firms are able to ensure that employees possess the required capabilities to respond efficiently to customer needs and operational challenges. The Resource Based View Theory maintains that firms attain competitive advantage through the development of valuable internal resources, including employee competence and technical expertise. Therefore, ancillary telecommunication firms that give priority to competency assessment are more likely to enhance operational efficiency, minimize service delays, improve customer satisfaction, and reinforce their competitive position within the telecommunication" industry.

Empirical Review

Supriya et al. (2024) "explored the significance of staff competencies as potential indicators of organizational effectiveness in the dynamic and competitive business landscape. In today's ever-changing market conditions, organizations continually strive for improvement and adaptation. This research focuses on uncovering the link between various employee skills, knowledge, talents, and attitudes, such as technical expertise, interpersonal communication, flexibility, problem-solving, leadership, and emotional intelligence, and their impact on key organizational performance metrics. The study made use of 127 respondents. Result revealed that there is a significant relationship between staff competencies and organizational effectiveness.

Akpotu and Tamunosiki-Amadi (2019) examined the empirical link between talent enrichment and operational sustainability. A sample of 216 employees the telecommunication sector in Nigeria was surveyed using questionnaire instrument. The data showed a positive and significant relationship between the constructs examined. This was noticeably strong with targeted skill mapping and operational effectiveness measured by quality service delivery, process improvement and timelines in service delivery. It is clear from the findings that talent enrichment remains a strategic imperative that engenders effective and efficient operations in work organisations. The findings hold strong theoretical implications in terms of operationalization of the variables that has been

hitherto viewed as unidimensional. Its value-driven implication in terms of managerial policy is underscored.

Yusuf et al. (2024) examined the competencies of staff for management of media resources and effective services delivery in federal university library Gashua Yobe State in North East, Nigeria. The objectives of the study includes; To find out the level of staff competences required for management of media resources and effective services delivered, Two research questions were formulated in line with the specific objectives that guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The entire population of the study was 49 librarians from Federal University Gashua library, the questionnaire title staff competencies required in management of media resources, and effective service delivery (SCRIMMRFESD). The responses of the librarian were used to answer the research questions. The instrument was structured on 4-point scale Management of media Resources The instruments were face validated by three experts, two experts from department of Library and Information Science and one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit, Department of Science Education, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Data was collected with the help of two briefed research assistance, the instrument was administered and retrieved within two weeks. The returned rate of the administered questionnaire was 100%. Data collected was analyzed using percentages, means and standard deviation to answer research questions. The findings of this study revealed different types of services delivered in Federal University Gashua library. Staff competencies for management of media resources and effective service delivery.

Afful and Mudzanan (2024) assessed the extension practitioners' demonstration of professional competencies in extension service delivery to small-holder farmers in the Thulamela municipality. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The assessment was conducted by soliciting the views of 80 crop and animal farmers in the municipality who were serviced by extension practitioners that had undergone professional capacity training since the implementation of the extension recovery plan (ERP). These farmers were purposely selected for this assessment. The findings showed that extension practitioners improved in their demonstration of professionalism in the eight key areas of service delivery investigated following the capacity training they had received. Extension practitioners' professionalism in extension service delivery significantly improved following capacity training in selected competency areas since the implementation of the extension recovery plan. The training provided since the implementation of the ERP appears to be making a positive contribution to improving the professionalism of extension practitioners' delivery of extension services to small-holder farmers in the area where the study was conducted and, therefore, in Limpopo" province.

Gap in Related Literature

Studies related to competency assessment and timely service delivery have been carried out (Supriya et al., 2024; Akpotu & Tamunosiki-Amadi, 2019; Yusuf et al., 2024; Afful & Mudzanan, 2024). However, from extant literature, the relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State is yet to be established. Therefore, there is need for such empirical study to be carried out in order to establish its evidence of relationship.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study was 50 managers from 50 ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire titled: Competency Assessment and Timely Service Delivery Index (CATSDI). The reliability of the questionnaire was achieved using the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. 46(92%) of the questionnaires was completely filled and retrieved for data analysis. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank order Correlation with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Table 1 Relationship between Objective Criteria and Timely Service Delivery

		Objective Criteria	Timely Service Delivery
Objective Criteria	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.699**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	46	46
	Timely Service Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	.699**
Timely Service Delivery	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	46	46

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

Source: Survey Data, 2026

Table 1 above shows r value of 0.699 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.01. Since the significance value 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.01, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) which states that there is no significant relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between objective criteria and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Table 2 Relationship between Fairness and Timely Service Delivery

		Fairness	Timely Service Delivery
Fairness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.703**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	46	46
	Timely Service Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	.703**
Timely Service Delivery	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	46	46

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

Source: Survey Data, 2026

Table 2 above shows r value of 0.703 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.01. Since the significance value 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.01, the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that there is no significant relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between fairness and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between competency assessment and timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. In line with the findings, performance evaluation models explicitly include competence and responsiveness as core parameters; the model was designed so that assessing these dimensions helps speed up service processes and improve customer satisfaction in telecom customer service (Utama et al., 2023). More so, a competence–service quality scale demonstrates that frontline employees' interpersonal and professional competencies are positively associated with reliability and responsiveness, two dimensions directly related to timely and dependable service delivery (Wu et al., 2015).

Furthermore, competency frameworks embedded in performance management and appraisal, align employee skills with organizational priorities and improve work performance, which underpins better service execution in telecommunication industry (Sahay & Kaur, 2021; Ovin et al., 2025). Studies on measuring competence in telecom companies find that higher competence significantly improves employee performance, suggesting that structured competence assessment is a lever for better, more efficient service to customers (Bawono & Arifianto, 2023; Sahay & Kaur, 2021).

Conclusion

Competency assessment ensures employees possess the required technical skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform their duties efficiently. Through objective and fair assessment practices, firms can identify skill gaps, improve employee performance, and align workforce capabilities with operational demands. This enables quicker response to customer complaints, faster resolution of network issues, and efficient handling of technical operations. Therefore, the study concluded that competency assessment enhances timely service delivery of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State should define specific, measurable performance metrics that align with the firm's service objectives, as such would enhance timely service delivery.
2. Management of ancillary telecommunication firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State should provide training for those conducting competency assessments as well-trained assessors are more likely to conduct fair evaluations, which would engineer employee morale and motivation, thus enhance their timely service delivery.

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