



Navigating the New Normal as Correlate of Wellness of Civil Servants in Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

This study examined navigating the new normal as a correlate of the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. The study was guided by three objectives, three research questions, and three hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The target population for the study comprised 19,780 civil servants in both the State Secretariat (Idongesit Nkanga Secretariat) and the Federal Secretariat in Akwa Ibom State. A sample size of 392 respondents was selected for the study using the stratified random sampling technique. Two researcher-developed instruments titled “Navigating the New Normal Questionnaire (NNNQ)” and “Wellness Questionnaire (WQ)” were used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education and one from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, University of Uyo. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha Statistical tool, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78. The collated data was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics to answer research questions, while the p-value associated with the r-coefficient was used to test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that physical activity, occupational

safety, and digital literacy have significant relationships with the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that physical activity, occupational safety, and digital literacy are crucial determinants of the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended, among others, that the government should prioritize the promotion of physical activity among civil servants by integrating regular exercise programs and wellness initiatives into workplace policies.

Keywords: Navigating, New Normal, Wellness, Physical Activity, Occupational Safety, Digital Literacy

Introduction

Wellness is a fundamental component of overall human development and quality of life. They encompass physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being, rather than merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Good health is a resource for everyday life. It is not just a variable of life and living but a positive concept which emphasises social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Wellness, on the other hand, refers to a holistic approach to health, which focuses on proactive measures that promote vitality, resilience, and a balanced life. In contemporary society, health and wellness have gained increasing prominence, especially in the context of rapid social and technological dynamics that shape individuals' lifestyles.

The wellness of civil servants is particularly critical because they form the backbone of public administration and service delivery in any nation. Civil servants are entrusted with implementing government policies, maintaining societal stability, and fostering national development. Their well-being directly influences their productivity, decision-making, and the quality of services they provide to the public. In Nigeria, including Akwa Ibom State, civil servants often operate under stressful conditions characterised by heavy workloads, resource constraints, and sometimes inadequate health support systems. These factors can negatively impact their overall wellness, leading to absenteeism, reduced efficiency, and increased healthcare costs.

The concept of wellness is a growing concern among the workforce as civil service has become even more complex in recent times due to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent global shifts in work and social environments. The pandemic highlighted vulnerabilities in health systems worldwide and underscored the importance of maintaining health and wellness in the face of unprecedented challenges (Ogunleye & Akinyemi, 2020). It also ushered in a paradigm shift towards the "new normal", a term that encapsulates the altered ways of working, social interactions, and health practices. This new reality demands that civil servants adapt to changing circumstances while safeguarding their health and wellness.

Navigating the new normal involves managing various facets of life and work amid ongoing uncertainties and transformations. It includes embracing physical activity to boost

immunity and mental health, ensuring occupational safety to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses, enhancing digital literacy to facilitate remote working and efficient communication, and securing health insurance coverage to mitigate medical expenses (Adebayo & Sulaimon, 2021). Additionally, the development and implementation of health promotion policies play a vital role towards the provision of environments that are conducive to health and wellness. These policies might include workplace wellness programmes, health screenings, mental health support, and policies that promote work-life balance. Social support networks are equally crucial, as they provide emotional reassurance, foster resilience, and improve survival strategies during challenging times. With regard to civil servants in Akwa Ibom State, these components for navigating the new normal are particularly relevant. Akwa Ibom State has a unique socio-cultural and economic landscape with specific challenges as well as opportunities that promote wellness among its civil service workforce. The state's health infrastructure, digital connectivity, and policy environment influence how effectively civil servants can adapt to the new normal. In this study, the variables to be considered include physical activity, occupational safety and digital literacy.

Physical activity refers to any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure. It encompasses a wide range of activities such as walking, running, cycling, and structured exercise routines. Engaging in regular physical activity is essential for maintaining optimal health, as it helps prevent chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity, while also promoting mental well-being by reducing stress and anxiety. With reference to workplace wellness among civil servants, physical activity enhances physical fitness, boosts immunity, and improves overall productivity and job performance. Therefore, encouraging consistent engagement in physical activity is a key strategy for supporting wellness in various populations, including civil servants navigating the new normal.

Apart from physical activity, occupational safety is another variable considered in this study. Occupational safety refers to the systematic efforts and measures implemented in the workplace to prevent accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses. Occupational safety is a construct which ensures a safe and healthy environment for employees. Its tenets include the identification and assessment of workplace hazards, the development of safety protocols, the provision of protective equipment, and the training of workers to recognise and mitigate risks associated with their tasks (Adebayo & Sulaimon, 2021). Maintaining occupational safety in a workplace is particularly important for civil servants because it directly impacts their health, productivity, and overall well-being. This is more so in settings where work-related hazards such as ergonomic strains, exposure to harmful substances, or physical injuries are prevalent (Ogunleye & Akinyemi, 2020). Occupational safety measures are needed for preventing work-related health issues, especially as many civil servants now engage in activities that require physical presence and interaction. Ensuring occupational safety does not only protect individual workers but also fosters a

culture of safety that enhances organisational resilience and promotes long-term health safety habits and positive work outcomes.

On the other hand, digital literacy refers to the ability to effectively use digital technologies, including computers, the internet, software applications, and other digital tools, to access, evaluate, create, and communicate information. It encompasses a range of skills, such as understanding how to navigate digital environments, critically assessing online content, and utilising digital resources for personal, educational, or professional purposes (Johnson & Smith, 2021). In the context of modern workplaces, especially among civil servants, digital literacy is crucial for efficient task execution, effective communication, and adaptation to technological advancements that streamline administrative processes. As digital transformation accelerates globally, developing digital literacy skills becomes essential for participating fully in society, ensuring data security, and leveraging technology for innovation and problem-solving. For instance, the integration of digital literacy into training programmes can enhance the ability to work remotely, access health information, and participate in health promotion activities.

The choice of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State as the focus of this study was motivated by several factors. First, civil servants represent a substantial segment of the workforce, and their health and wellness directly impact public service delivery and governance. Their welfare is crucial for sustaining effective administrative functions, especially during times of crisis. Second, Akwa Ibom State, with its burgeoning developmental projects and socio-economic dynamics, provides an exceptional reason for examining how navigating the new normal influences health outcomes among public employees. The state's specific challenges such as infrastructure deficits, health system limitations, and cultural factors offer valuable insights into the strategies needed to enhance wellness in this demographic. Furthermore, the researcher was motivated by the observable shifts in work modalities, health practices, and social interactions among civil servants in Akwa Ibom State since the onset of the pandemic. There is a growing concern about how these changes affect workers' physical health, mental well-being, and overall capacity to perform duties effectively. The gap in empirical data regarding the relationship between navigating the new normal and wellness in this population further justifies the need for this study, all with a view to investigating and navigating the new normal as a correlate of the health and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal scenario, civil servants in Akwa Ibom State would seamlessly adapt to the new normal brought about by global health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This they would do by maintaining optimal health and wellness while effectively performing their duties. This would involve adequate access to health information, robust social support systems, and organisational structures that promote mental and physical well-being. In an ideal situation, the wellness of civil servants would be prioritised as a critical component

of public service delivery, fostering a healthy workforce capable of driving sustainable development in the state.

However, as observed by the researcher, there is a significant deviation from this ideal scenario. Many civil servants in Akwa Ibom State experience heightened stress, anxiety and health-related issues due to inadequate support systems, poor work-life balance, and limited access to health resources, especially after the pandemic and other health emergencies. There is also evidence of increased burnout, mental health struggles, and a decline in overall wellness. These factors may negatively impact their productivity and service delivery (Eze & Nwosu, 2022). This deviation highlights the gaps in organisational policies and support mechanisms that are essential for navigating the new normal effectively; such a scenario may also compromise their health and wellness.

Despite government efforts at implementing wellness programmes among civil servants through health insurance schemes and physical exercises, especially during civil service week and annual leave, there remains a lack of comprehensive, targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by civil servants in this regard. The researcher is motivated to conduct this study to identify the specific factors affecting their wellness, evaluate existing support systems, and propose actionable recommendations to enhance their capacity to cope. Recognising the pivotal role civil servants play in public service delivery and societal development, the researcher aims at contributing valuable insights that can inform policy reforms and foster a healthier, more resilient workforce in Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate navigating the new normal as a correlate of the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the objectives of this study include:

- i. To determine the relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. To determine the relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii. To determine the relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What is the relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?

- ii. What is the relationship between occupational safety and the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?
- iii. What is the relationship between digital literacy and the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at the .05 level of significance:

- i. There is no significant relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii. There is no significant relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Method

A correlational research design was adopted for this study. This design is a type of non-experimental study that examines the relationship or association between two or more variables. It enables the researcher to establish the magnitude and direction of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The purpose of this design is to ascertain the extent to which the status of one variable can be predicted from the status of another variable. According to Creswell and Creswell (2020), correlational research design is useful for identifying patterns and associations between independent and dependent variables. This design was considered suitable for this study, as it measured variables as they naturally occur and analysed the degree to which they vary together, often using statistical techniques such as correlation coefficients.

The study area for this research was Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Akwa Ibom State is a state in the South-South geopolitical zone in Nigeria, bordered to the east by Cross River State, to the west by River State and Abia State, and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean. The state takes its name from the Kwa Ibo River, which bisects the state before flowing into the Bight of Bonny. Akwa Ibom was created out of Cross River State in 1987 with its capital at Uyo and has 31 local government areas of Nigeria. Among the states in Nigeria, Akwa Ibom is the least of the Nigerian states by landmass and also the least populated, with an estimated population of nearly 5.5 million as of 2016.

Geographically, the state is divided between the Central African mangroves in the coastal far south and the Cross-Niger transition forests in the rest of the state. Other important geographical features are the Imo River and Cross River (Nigeria) rivers, which flow along Akwa Ibom's eastern and western borders, respectively, while the Kwa Ibo

River bisects the state before flowing into the Bight of Bonny. In the southeast corner of the state is the Stubbs Creek Forest Reserve, a heavily threatened wildlife reserve that contains declining crocodile, putty-nose monkey, red-capped-mangabey, and sclaters guenon populations along with almost extinct and endangered populations of African leopard and Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee. Akwa Ibom State has been inhabited by various ethnic groups for hundreds of years, primarily the closely related Ibibio people, Anang people, and Oro peoples in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District, and Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District zones of the state, respectively. In the pre-colonial period, what is now Akwa Ibom State was divided into various city-states like the Ibom Kingdom and Akwa Akpa before it later became a British protectorate in 1884 as a part of the Oil Rivers Protectorate. In the early 1900s, the British actually gained formal control of the area before incorporating the protectorate (now renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate) into the Southern Nigeria Protectorate, which later merged into British Nigeria; after the merger, much of modern-day Akwa Ibom became a centre of anti-colonial resistance during the women's war and political activism through the Ibibio State Union. Economically, Akwa Ibom State is based around the production of crude oil and natural gas, as it is the highest oil-producing state in the country. Key minor industries involve agriculture, as the state has substantial cocoyam, yam, vegetables and other crops along with fish. However, the state is classified as a civil service state because most occupants depend on government work (white-collar jobs). This therefore makes the area suitable for the study.

The area of the study is chosen as a result of several health issues observed among civil servants, which often include stress-related conditions, mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression, musculoskeletal problems like back pain and neck strain due to prolonged sitting and workstation ergonomics, cardiovascular issues related to sedentary lifestyles, and respiratory problems stemming from poor indoor air quality or exposure to pollutants. In addition, civil servants may experience work-related fatigue, sleep disturbances, and lifestyle-related conditions such as hypertension, obesity, and diabetes, which are often linked to occupational stress, lack of physical activity, and unhealthy dietary habits. Addressing these health issues requires comprehensive wellness programmes and workplace health interventions to promote overall well-being among civil servants.

The target population for the study comprised 19,780 civil servants in both the State Secretariat (Idongesit Nkanga Secretariat) and the Federal Secretariat located in Akwa Ibom State. This figure comprises 13,537 in Akwa Ibom (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Work, 2026) and 6,243 from the Federal Secretariat (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2026), respectively. They were all spread in each civil service (Ministries, Boards, Agencies and Parastatals). A sample size of 392 respondents was selected for the study using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula. From the sample size, 196 respondents (50%) were selected from the State Secretariat and 196 respondents (50%) from the Federal Secretariat. The respondents were selected using the random sampling technique. A random sampling is a

sampling technique where every individual in a population has an equal chance of being selected, ensuring that the sample is representative of the entire population and reducing selection bias. Thus, the sample size was a minimum of 392 respondents. The non- or incomplete responses were regarded as invalid and were not included in the data analysis. The inclusion criteria included civil servants who were still in service and have their names in the nominal roll of their different departments and civil servants who were willing to participate in the study.

Two researcher-developed instruments entitled “Navigating the New Normal Questionnaire (NNNQ)” and “Wellness Questionnaire (WQ)” were used for data collection. The NNNQ contains 30 items with five items per sub-variable of the independent variable. It was structured on a four Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively, while WQ contains five items on wellness. It was adopted from the World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5) on a six-point scale of “All of the Time”, “Most of the Time”, “More than Half of the Time”, “Less than Half of the Time”, “Some of the Time”, and “At no Time”, weighted 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0, respectively.

For face validation, the instrument, NNNQ, was submitted to three experts in the Faculty of Education, two from the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education and one from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, University of Uyo, for validation. The researcher asked the validators to assess the instrument to see if the items are clear and relevant to elicit the data required and to what extent the instrument is related to the content of the objectives, research questions and hypotheses and if the instrument adequately measured the concept it is expected to measure. The second instrument, WQ, since it was adopted, was considered valid. The corrections made by the validators were effected before the instrument was shown to the research supervisor, who gave approval before the final version of the questionnaire was produced for the fieldwork.

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a test was conducted with 30 respondents who did not participate in the main study but were part of the population. Data obtained were analysed using the Cronbach Alpha Statistical tool to calculate the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The Cronbach's alpha statistical tool is suitable for reliability tests when testing for the internal consistency reliability. According to Atare (2022), internal consistency reliability is applied to assess the extent of differences within the test items that explore the same construct to produce similar results. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 and 0.81 was obtained for NNNQ and WQ, respectively, which made the instruments considered suitable for the study.

With a letter of introduction, the researcher visited the state and federal secretariats to obtain permission from the Directors of Departments and the Ministries to carry out the study. After obtaining permission to carry out the study, the researcher proceeded with the help of two adequately briefed research assistants to distribute copies of the questionnaire to the respondents in their offices. The days of distribution were the same as the days of retrieving the instruments. Care was taken to ensure that copies of the questionnaire

administered to the respondents were retrieved at the spot so as to ensure a high return rate. However, out of 392 copies of the questionnaire administered, 387 copies were valid and used for data analysis (99% retrieval rate). Data generated were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics for answering research questions. The same statistical tool (PPMC) was used for testing of the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance.

The decision rule for interpreting the correlation coefficients was adopted from Atare (2022). The coefficient (r) was interpreted based on the magnitude of the relationship, such that an r -value of 0.90 and above indicated an excellent relationship; 0.80–0.90 indicated a very good relationship; 0.70–0.80 indicated a good relationship; 0.60–0.70 indicated a low relationship; 0.50–0.60 indicated a very low relationship; while an r -value of 0.50 and below indicated no relationship. For testing the null hypotheses, the decision was based on the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected when the p -value was less than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq .05$), indicating that the observed relationship was statistically significant. Conversely, when the p -value was greater than 0.05 ($p > .05$), the null hypothesis was retained, indicating that the observed relationship was not statistically significant.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Coefficient between Physical Activity and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	Remark
Physical Activity	387	.812	Very Good Relationship
Wellness of Civil Servants			

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The entries in Table 1 reveal the strength of the relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants. The results reveal that the r -value of .812 indicates a very good positive relationship. Therefore, the result implies that there is a very good and positive relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Coefficient between Occupational Safety and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	Remark
Occupational Safety	387	.622	Low Relationship
Wellness of Civil Servants			

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The entries in Table 2 reveal the type and strength of relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants. The results reveal that the r-value of .622 is low and positive. Therefore, the result implies that there is a low and positive relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between Digital Literacy and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	Remark
Digital Literacy	387	.716	Good Relationship
Wellness of Civil Servants			

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The entries in Table 3 reveal the type and strength of the relationship between digital literacy and the wellness of civil servants. The results reveal that the r-value of .716 is good and positive. Therefore, the result implies that there is a good and positive relationship between digital literacy and the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 4: Summary of R-value Associated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Physical Activity and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	P-Value	Remark
Physical Activity	387	.812	.000	Significant
Wellness of Civil Servants				
df = 385		*P < .05*		

The revelation, as shown in Table 4, reports the r-value of .812 with its corresponding p-value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance with 385 degrees of freedom.

The result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which claims that there is no significant relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State, is rejected. This result means that there is a significant relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 5: Summary of R-value Associated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Occupational Safety and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	P-Value	Remark
Occupational Safety	387	.622	.001	Significant
Wellness of Civil Servants				
df = 385	*P < .05*			

The output in Table 5 reports the r-value of .622 with its corresponding p-value of .001, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance with 385 degrees of freedom. The result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which claims that there is no significant relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State, is rejected. This result means that there is a significant relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Null Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 6: Summary of R-value Associated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Digital Literacy and Wellness of Civil Servants (n = 387)

Variables	n	r	P-Value	Remark
Digital Literacy	387	.716	.000	Significant
Wellness of Civil Servants				
df = 385	*P < .05*			

The output in Table 6 reports the r-value of .716 with its corresponding p-value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance with 385 degrees of freedom. The result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which claims that there is no significant relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State, is rejected. This result means that there is a significant relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of Findings

The finding has shown that there is a very good and significant relationship between physical activity and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. This finding could be attributed to the fact that physical activity plays a crucial role in enhancing overall wellness among civil servants. Engaging in regular physical activity improves cardiovascular health, boosts immune function, and enhances mental well-being, which are all vital components of wellness. Civil servants who participate in physical activities are likely to experience reduced stress levels, increased energy, and a better mood, all of which contribute positively to their overall health. Additionally, physical activity may improve sleep quality and physical fitness, which are essential for maintaining productivity and resilience in the demanding work environment of civil service. Furthermore, civil servants with access to well-equipped gyms, sports clubs, or wellness schemes are more likely to engage consistently in physical activities, thus experiencing better wellness outcomes. Conversely, those with limited access or awareness of such facilities may have lower participation, impacting their health negatively. In essence, the significant relationship can be explained by the direct impact of physical activity on physical and mental health, coupled with the environmental and institutional factors that either facilitate or hinder active participation among civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

This finding is in line with Johnson and Smith (2021), which indicated that higher levels of physical activity were significantly associated with improved wellness outcomes. Specifically, civil servants engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity reported 30 per cent lower stress levels, 25 per cent better self-rated health, and 20 per cent higher mental well-being scores. The finding also agreed with that of Bashir (2020), who found that physical activity was associated with reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety among civil servants. The study is, however, not in support of Adeyemi and Oladipo (2021), which revealed that physical activity was negatively associated with stress levels and fatigue, highlighting its role in stress management. This difference may be attributed to variations in the population. Additionally, methodological differences, such as the measurement tools and data collection methods used, could have contributed to the contrasting results between the two studies.

The finding has shown that there is a low and significant relationship between occupational safety and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. This finding could be attributed to the fundamental role of occupational safety in maintaining the overall health and well-being of civil servants. When workplaces in Akwa Ibom State prioritise and implement comprehensive safety measures such as proper safety protocols, provision of protective equipment, and hazard management, employees are less exposed to work-related risks and injuries. This creates a secure environment that fosters confidence and reduces stress among civil servants, thereby positively influencing their physical and mental wellness. Furthermore, a safe working environment enhances job satisfaction and morale.

This is due to the fact that as employees feel valued and protected, their satisfaction will contribute to their psychological well-being. It also encourages consistent attendance and active engagement in work-related activities, thereby reducing absenteeism that may result from injuries or stress-related illnesses. The presence of effective occupational safety measures often indicates organisational commitment to employee health, which can lead to increased awareness and adherence to safety practices among staff. This aligns with Akinyele and Adeyemo (2023), which revealed that occupational safety significantly predicted wellness outcomes, with higher perception associated with better mental and physical health. The finding is also in agreement with Ogunleye and Adebisi (2020), which revealed that occupational safety practices are integral to promoting wellness among civil servants, emphasising the need for effective safety policies and training programmes. This finding is, however, not in support of Adeyemi (2023), who found that previous exposure to occupational accidents negatively impacted wellness scores, reinforcing the importance of preventive safety measures and that there is no significant influence of occupational safety on wellness.

The finding has shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between digital literacy and wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. This finding highlighted the significant relationship between digital literacy and the overall wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. In a rapidly digitalising world, digital literacy equips employees with the skills needed to effectively navigate various digital platforms, tools, and resources, which are increasingly integral to modern workplaces. When civil servants possess high digital literacy, they can perform their tasks more efficiently, access information quickly, and communicate effectively, thereby reducing work-related stress and enhancing job satisfaction. Moreover, digital literacy fosters a sense of competence and confidence in using technology and, by so doing, positively influences mental health and reduces anxiety associated with technological challenges. It also enables civil servants to participate in online training, wellness programmes, and social interactions, contributing to continuous personal and professional development. Furthermore, digital literacy facilitates better access to health information, wellness resources, and support networks, empowering civil servants to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. It can also foster a sense of community and social connectedness through online platforms, enhancing social support systems crucial for psychological wellness. The finding is in line with Kone and Tcham (2018), which revealed that civil servants with higher digital literacy were 2.5 times more likely to report better wellness outcomes. This finding is in tandem with the finding of Okonkwo *et al.* (2020), which indicated a positive association between digital literacy and wellness. This finding is not in concord with that of Adegoke *et al.* (2022), which revealed that digital literacy did not significantly predict better mental health, productivity, and job satisfaction.

Conclusion

From the data analysis, the findings of this study revealed that physical activity, occupational safety, digital literacy, health insurance coverage, health promotion policies and social support systems have significant relationships with the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that factors such as physical activity, occupational safety, digital literacy, health insurance coverage, health promotion policies, and social support systems play a crucial role in determining the wellness of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following are recommended:

- i. Government should prioritise the promotion of physical activity among civil servants by integrating regular exercise programmes and wellness initiatives into workplace policies.
- ii. Every ministry in state and federal secretariats should strengthen occupational safety protocols by conducting regular training and safety audits and ensuring compliance with safety standards.
- iii. Government agencies should implement comprehensive digital literacy training programmes for civil servants in order to empower employees to access health resources, engage in online wellness activities, and utilise digital tools for health management.

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