

## **Employees' Welfare and Employees' Productivity in Academic Institution in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

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*The present study attempts to provide empirical evidence on the influence of employees' welfare on the employees' productivity in the academic institutions in Nigeria. The study examined the specific influence of employees' welfare dimensions on the employees' productivity in the academic institutions. The employees' welfare dimensions considered in this study are pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social programs. Towards this end, a questionnaire survey among 60 employees of Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) was conducted and self-administered questionnaire was employed to gathered data from the participants on employees' welfare dimensions and employees' productivity. Then SmartPLS 3.0 was used to analysed the data in order to examine the proposed influence and it was found that employees' welfare has a negative influence on the employees' productivity of the academic institution while on the other hand, employees' welfare dimensions such as pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social programs were to have positive and significant influence on the employees' productivity of the academic institution. The study presents discussion on findings with limitations and suggestion for future research.*

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**Keywords:** Employees' Welfare, Employees' Productivity, Academic institution, Nigeria

### **1. Introduction**

According to Afolaranmi (2004) employees' welfare is a vital aspect of management function that must not be neglected as some of the welfare provisions are required by law. These employees' welfares include free medical care or services, sick leave and other social programmes.

It equally involves benefits giving to workers at period of separation such as pensions, gratuities etc. decision on issues like this are often made by the top management upon the advice of personal department. The role of employees' welfare in enhancing the competitiveness and continuity of an organization in the business place has been realised by many academic institutions (Ayinde, 2014; Oshagbemi, 2000; Oshagbemi, 1999). In order for an organization to form an efficient human resources management (HRM) practices, it not only needs to understand the concept of HRM management but also the employees' welfare for the improvement of employees' job outcome and consequently, overall performance of the organization.

Furthermore, there appear to be limited and scanty literature in the area of employees' welfare in relation to employees' productivity in the developing countries. For instance, most of the studies reviewed were conducted in the developed countries such as U.S and U.K with very little studies conducted in the developing country such as Nigeria particularly within the academic setting. This study is therefore motivated by the need to fill this gap. Also, despite the importance of employees' welfare in employee productivity and the overall performance of the organization, employee's welfare in the organization it is still not well supported by the private institutions in Nigeria. Most of these private institutions do not give serious attention to the issue of employees' welfare. In fact, some of them appear to see it as waste rather than investment. They fail to foresee the desirability of continuous employees' welfare in order to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the employees in the organisation. Some of the institutions that provide welfare to the employees are doing so in an ad-hoc and haphazard manner, and as such, employees' welfare in those organizations is more or less unplanned and unsystematic. This view is corroborated by Nwachukwu (2007) who argued that many employees have failed in organizations because of lack of basic welfare of the employees.

Previous studies on staff welfare and productivity mostly dwelt on industrial settings and corporate organizations to the neglect of academic institutions like the universities including the private universities. For example, the studies by Okereke & Daniel (2010) and Kemboi, Geoffrey, Thomas and Keter (2013) were all conducted within the scope of industrial settings and corporate organizations. There is a need to extend frontiers in knowledge especially within the academic institution since academic institution play crucial role in the overall economic development and transformation of the nation. Thus, this study sought to answer questions on employee welfare and employees productivity within the academic institution context. It is argued that organizational performance depends on the individual employee performance because human resource capital of the organization through effective employee's welfare plays an important role in the growth and the organizational performance. The fundamental question emanating from this analogy is: how can an employee improve his/her job productivity and enhance the performance of the organization? The answer to this question is not far-fetched. There are many factors which improve the work of the employee and overall performance of the organization and one of such factor is employee's welfare (Ayinde, 2014) which forms the central issue of this study. Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between employees' welfare and employees' productivity with particular interest in the higher institutions in Nigeria. Author such as Malaolu & Ogbuabor (2013) argued that even though there are several theoretical and empirical studies on employee productivity as well as the organizational performance; however, more studies are still required. Malaolu & Ogbuabor (2013) affirmed that research in the area of employee's productivity and organizational performance is very promising and requires more research. The present study anchors on this view and therefore wants to contribute its quota. Hence, the study examines employees' welfare and employees' productivity in academic institution in Nigeria with a particular interest in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Empirical Review: Relating Employees' welfare and employees' productivity**

Academic literature linking employees' welfare and performance in general tends to be abundant particularly in the field of organizational performance and motivation. Many of these studies have linked employees' welfare to several academic concepts such as organizational performance, judiciary performance, creations, Small Scale Industries and so on, the list may be endless. For example, the recent study in Kenya by Moruri, Evans & Jennifer (2018) linked welfare to the performance of the judiciary. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between motivational factors and employee performance in the judiciary systems located in the North Rift Region of Kenya. The study used a stratified random sampling to select 179 employees in whom data was obtained via questionnaire survey.

The analysis of the data was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics and the finding revealed that the motivational factors of employee welfare facilities predict the performance of the judiciary employees. It showed that the performance of the judiciary improved through a reduction in case backlogs and expeditious determination of cases. This implies that there is a need to design effective employee welfare facilities that are likely to stimulate employee efforts towards performance. Although the study used a stratified sampling technique, however, a systematic sampling could have been more suitable as every *n*th element of the population could have opportunity of being included in the study rather than using a subgroup of the population. Another issue with this study is that it viewed welfare package or facilities as a whole-single construct rather than examining each of these constructs that make up welfare facilities, by so doing the influence of each dimension of welfare facilities can be obtained.

Further study by Divya (2016) equally related employees' welfare with ARFA creations, Dindigul in India. The major objective of the study is to examine employees' welfare measures provided by an organization while also measuring the satisfaction of the employee towards the measures. Apart from that, the study among others also analysed the working conditions and welfare facilities provided to the employees by the ARFA creations. Due to this, an interview schedule and questionnaire tool was used to elucidate from 100 employees in ARFA creations and the result from the data analysis shown that the employees' welfare facilities is not significant as majority of the employees appear not to be satisfied with the medical facilities, and they were not aware of pension schemes. The study could not establish a causal-relationship between welfare facilities and other factors because it was only limited to descriptive design.

Similarly, Ravi & Raja (2016) examined the employee welfare measures in the Small Scale Industries at Hosur, Tamilnadu. The study linked welfare measures to employees staying in the organization. Both primary and secondary data were employed in which structured questionnaire and books, journals and websites were consulted and selected through systematic stratified random sampling technique. Using a simple percentage method and chi-square test, the study found that there is a positive reactions to link welfare benefits in the organization as employee reactions were neutral towards the facilities provided by the company. The welfare measures in the organization were found to be the factors that were making the employees to stay in the organization and to work towards success of the organization and this has been evident in this organization. Unfortunately, the analytical tool used in this study seems to be weak as a better relationship could not be established. It was equally reported that employees' welfare in the form of wages and working conditions and also other policy elements, such as retirement schemes, flexible scheduling and safety health services to a greater extent contribute to a great deal to service delivery through the employees' productivity (Kadir, Shaharuddin, Kadaruddin, Azhan, Azmi, Lukman, & Adabi 2010; Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, Crouter, 2000; Farnsworth, 2004). They further noted that safety and health in the workplace, flexible scheduling and retirement plans are great contributors to the productivity in any organization that adopt them.

According to Taylor (2000), there are empirical evidence to show significant associations between membership of pension scheme and reduction of turnover among human capital while Chen, Yang, Shiau, & Wang (2006) in their study of satisfaction level of educators on six quality attributes and the priority of improvements in Taiwan found that the retirement provision scheme is among the top three concerns of educators which enhance the job motivation level of educators in institutions. Haines, Davis, Rancour, Robinson, Wilson, and Wagner (2007) studied on the effectiveness of the 12-weeks walking program in improving the health of employees. After attending a study orientation, 125 college faculties and staff were requested to complete Godin Leisure Time exercise questionnaires in order to seek their current physical activity status. The results proved that the health promotion programs have positively impacted on the welfare of employees and service delivery.

Accordingly, Eaton, Marx, & Bowie (2007) studied various employee welfare programs in United States institutions and its impacts on health behavior and status of faculty and staff. Through the data collected via computer-assisted telephone interviews, self-administered mail questionnaires and computer-assisted personal interviews, the finding revealed that employee wellness programs have positively impacted on the health and well-being of employees increasing on service delivery. In attempt to study the employee's environment on career satisfaction, Froeschle & Sinkford (2009) obtained data from 451 full-time faculty members of 38 institutions through online surveys, and they found that most of the dental faculty members were willing to remain in the institutions with the provision of flexible scheduling practices.

Bellamy & Watty (2003) study of how working conditions affect job satisfaction among the academicians in Malaysian Tertiary Education Institutions claimed that flexible scheduling is the most important factor to retain academic staff besides the factor of autonomy. They noted that the academic employees feel well motivated to stay put in the institutions whenever they enjoy the provision of flexible scheduling benefits.

## **2.2 Theoretical Underpinning-Motivational Theory**

Available literature in the academic domain has revealed several theories of motivation otherwise called motivational theories. Popular among these theories are Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Needs theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; Maslow, 1970). These theories have been used to explain how employees can be triggered or gingered to perform better in their various tasks assigned to them by the organization. The present study focuses on the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to explain how welfare benefits can be used to achieve expected employee productivity in the organization.

According to Herzberg's (1959) motivation theory, certain factors determine people satisfaction or performance at their workplace (Maslow, 1970). The theory assumed that motivators which he called satisfiers are linked with long-time positive effects in performance. Herzberg found that certain factors such as personal achievement and salary influence peoples' productivity including their performance. The theory posits that there are two separate and environment which are responsible for motivating and satisfying staff; and these two factors are called motivator and hygiene factors. Generally, there are the factors in the job content which create positive feelings among staff and thereby motivating staff to superior efforts and performance. A typical example of these factors is employees' welfare benefits which are: pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social program. Adopting this theory, Hamzah, Lucky & Joarder (2015) explained that Herzberg's (1959) theory of motivation drives people to perform better in his or her task. They noted that productivity which is measured as performance is equally affected by motivational forces as researchers have found that motivation is positively related to their productivity (Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenens, 2005). In line with this theory, it is therefore believe that employees' welfare is directly linked to their productivity. For example, employees that enjoy some days off during examination days, partnering with hospitals for healthcare, availability of social clubs, gymnasium, and sports clubs in the institution; and, commuter allowance subsidies and car loans to facilitate staff transportation etc. are likely to be more productive than those who do not enjoy those welfare packages. Again, employees are ready to work more productively and effectively for the success of the organization if they are assured of some welfare packages such as pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social program.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Research design**

Experience has shown that research design for any study is best determined by the nature of the construct or variable being investigated. In this case, this study applied a cross-sectional research design with a quantitative research approach of survey questionnaires. Olajide (2007) affirmed that both cross-sectional design and quantitative research approach of survey questionnaire are suitable in a social science study like this. It is faster and easier in terms of gathering information within a limited time (Hair, Money, Samoul and Page, 2007).

### **3.2 Population and sampling technique**

The population for this study covers all academic staff of Adeleke University, Osun State, Nigeria. For the sampling technique, the study employed convenience sampling technique to collect data from the respondents. The sampling technique becomes important since it is difficult for the researchers to determine the actual population of the study. For instance, the researchers were unable to get the data from the school authority.

### **3.3 Measurement of Variables**

In this study, two major variables namely; employees' welfare and employees' productivity are under investigation and were subsequently measured. Employees' welfare was measured using 11 questionnaire items adopted from the previous work of Afolaranmi (2004), and reflect include free medical care or services, sick leave and other social programmes. Also, the employees' productivity was equally measured using 4 questionnaire items adapted from Aderinto (1981) and Ayinde 2014, and reflected effectiveness and efficiency. For this study, all items in the scale were measured on a 5-point Likert-scales (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree).

### 3.4 Data collection procedure

Data was collected through self-administered. A total of 60 questionnaires were retrieved out the ones that were distributed.

#### 4.1 PLS Estimation Results with smartPLS

The use of SmartPLS in this study is in line with certain conditions such as the explanation on endogenous construct, variance-based methods and the violation of the basic assumptions (Sharma & Kim, 2012). Another condition that warrants the use of SmartPLS in this study is the need to deal with both formative and reflective construct, which is the exact situation in this study. Thus, these situations reflect the present study and therefore, the study opted for the use of PLS for the data analysis (Chin, 1998; Chin 1995).

#### 4.2 Measurement Model

For the model measurement, construct validity was conducted, using the smartPLS, with a two-step Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach by Anderson & Gerbing (1988). Based on this, the internal reliability and convergent validity for constructs were first conducted and then followed by the assessment of the discriminant validity of constructs as indicated in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. For this, a minimum loading of 0.7 and above value was required for an item to be accepted for cross loadings and composite reliability as suggested. Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt (2011).

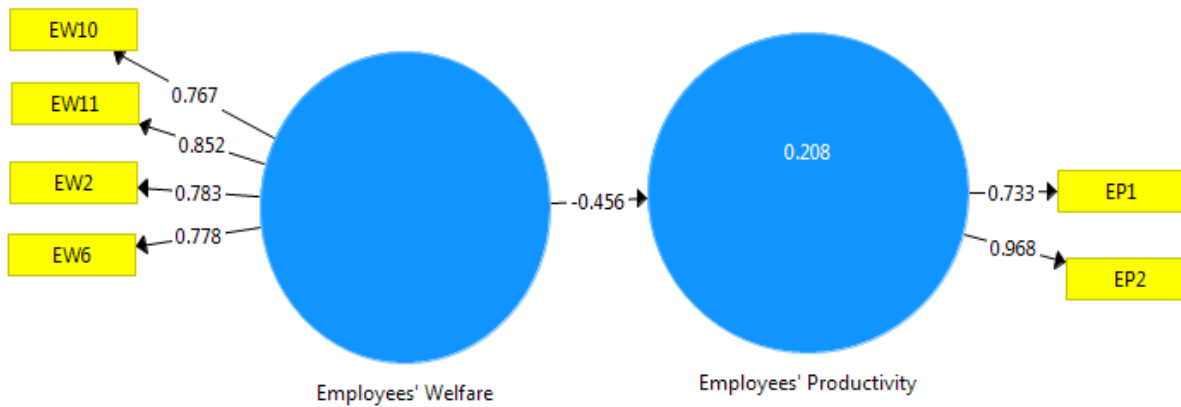
The result in Table 1 as well as model 1 indicates loaded items with their outer loading. For the employees' welfare variable only four items out of eleven items produced the acceptable outer loadings. Items coded EW10, EW11, EW2 and EW6 produced outer loadings of 0.767, 0.852, 0.783 and 0.778 respectively while items coded EP1 and EP2 for employees' productivity produced outer loadings of 0.733 and 0.968 respectively. The outer loading scores indicate that all indicators met minimum loadings of 0.7 and above as suggested by Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt (2011).

Also, Table 1 depicts the average variance extracted (AVE), Cronbachs Alpha, rho\_A and the composite reliability. The Table shows AVE scores of 0.619334 and 0.693501 for both employees' welfare and employees' productivity respectively; Cronbachs Alpha scores of 0.822 and 0.699 both employees' welfare and employees' productivity respectively; rho\_A scores of 0.942 and 0.699 employees' welfare and employees' productivity; average variance scores of 0.633 and 0.7373 for employees' welfare and employees' productivity and finally composite reliability scores of 0.873 and 0.846 for employees' welfare and employees' productivity. For example, the AVE for the items met the minimum value of 0.5 which is considered accepted (Gefen and Straub, 2000), while the discriminant validity of constructs determined by the average variance shared between each construct and its measures should exceed the variance shared between the construct and other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 1 further indicates that all construct utilized in the study produced AVE values more than the suggested value of 0.5 by Bagozzi, Youjae & Phillips (1991). Accordingly, the result also indicates that all construct yielded factor loading more than 0.7 as suggested by Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt (2011), while the values for composite reliability also indicated 0.7 and above as suggested. Gefen & Straub, 2000) suggesting that the measurement model has achieved satisfactory internal reliability and convergent validity.

**Table 1: Measurement Model Result: Construct Reliability and Validity**

Latent variables	Items	Loadings	AVE	Cronbachs Alpha	rho_A	Average Variance	Composite Reliability
Employees Welfare	EW10	0.767	0.619334	0.822	0.942	0.633	0.873
	EW11	0.852					
	EW2	0.783					
	EW6	0.778					
Employees Productivity	EP1	0.733	0.693501	0.699	0.699	0.7373	0.846
	EP2	0.968					

**Note:**<sup>a</sup> Composite Reliability (CR) = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/[(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (square of the summation of the error variances)];<sup>b</sup> Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = (summation of the square of the factor loadings)/[(summation of the square of the factor loadings) + (summation of the error variances)].



**Figure 2: Loading factors**

Table was used to judge the discriminant validity of the constructs and the correlation between variables. The result in Table 2 revealed that the measurement model has achieved an adequate discriminant validity as the corrections are less than the square root of the average variance extracted suggested by validity (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011).

**Table 2: Discriminant Validity of Constructs**

Latent Variables	1	2
Employees' Productivity	<b>0.8584</b>	
Employees' Welfare	-0.456	<b>0.7966</b>

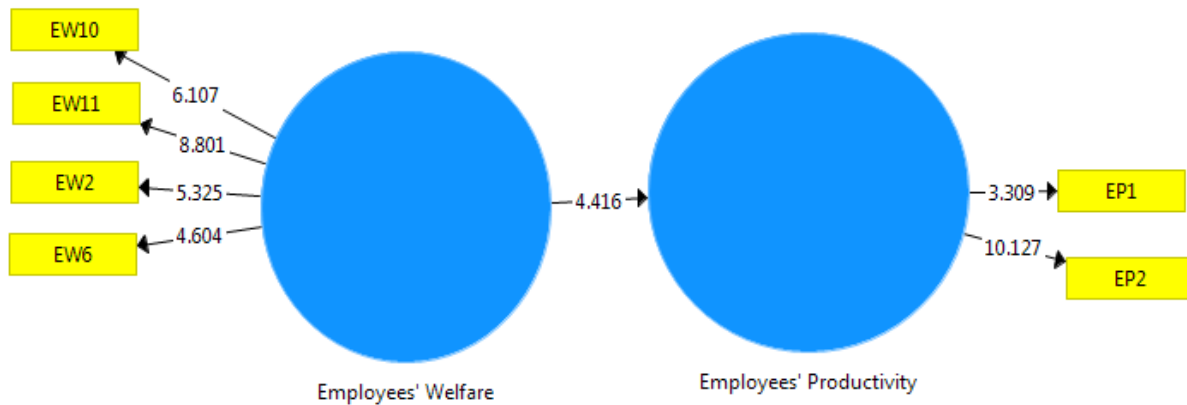
Note: Diagonals (bold face) represent the square root of the average variance extracted while the other entries represent the correlations.

**4.3 Structural model**

Table 4, which represents the SMARTPLS structural model result, demonstrates the influence of the exogenous variables on the endogenous construct. In all, the result revealed that employees' welfare significantly affects employees' productivity ( $\beta = -85\%$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). The result revealed an  $R^2$  of **0.208** and **Adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.195**, representing approximately 21 percent of variance explained by independent constructs (employees' welfare) on the dependent construct- employees' productivity.

**Table 4: SMARTPLS Structural Model Result**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	Standard Deviation	t-Statistics	p-Value	Decision
<b>H1:</b>	Employees Welfare -> Employees Productivity	-0.456	0.103	4.416	0.000	Supported
<b>H1a:</b>	EW10 (pension plan)<- Employees Productivity	0.767	0.126	6.107	0.000	Supported
<b>H1b:</b>	EW11 (retirement plan)<- Employees Productivity	0.852	0.0097	8.801	0.000	Supported
<b>H1c:</b>	EW2 (Transport allowance)<- Employees Productivity	0.783	0.147	5.325	0.000	Supported
<b>H1d:</b>	EW6 (other social program)<- Employees Productivity	0.778	0.169	4.604	0.000	Supported



**Figure 3: Variables Relationship**

### 5.1 Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of employees' welfare on the employees' productivity. In this study, the academic institution in Nigeria is the focus with particular interest in OAU. The study begins by generally discussing the concept of employees' welfare and employees' productivity and argued that indeed employees' welfare is directly related to productivity of the employees within the academic institutions. While the study earlier noted several issues concerning the employees' welfare and productivity, specific issues concerning employees' welfare such as pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social program that are affecting the productivity of the employees were examined using the SmartPLS. Thus, the study characterised employees' welfare as pension plan, retirement plan, Transport allowance and other social program. Apart from examining the employees' welfare as a whole, the study also examined employees' welfare reflectively by looking into its measured indicator variables. Hence, these reflective indicators are a representative sample of the main construct-employees' welfare.

First the study found overall negative support for the influence of employees' welfare on the employees' productivity, suggesting that employees' welfare negatively affects employees' productivity in the academic institutions in Nigeria (path coefficient=-.456;  $p < -0.000$ ). Although, the finding indicates a negative influence, however, employees' welfare is still believed to have great influence on the productivity of the academic employees. It implies that employees' welfare remains one of the most important factors for motivating and enhancing the productivity of the employees within the academic institutions in Nigeria. This may be so because in a situation where employees' welfare are neglected or ignored, employees are more likely to perform below expectation leading to low productivity. For example, where employees are meant to work throughout the year without annual leave, holiday, medical leave etc., there is tendency that some of the employees may fall sick or become weak to perform their tasks thereby performing below expectation leading to low productivity. The *Resources Based View theory* by Penrose (1959) supports the welfare of the employees. The theory believes that employees would give their best if they perceived that the organisation has a good welfare package for them. But on the contrary, employees would do otherwise in the absence of welfare package for them. Consistent with the previous study by Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, Crouter (2000) which claimed that employees' welfare is a great contributor to the productivity in any organization. Additionally, they claimed that employees' productivity is affected by varieties of welfare services such as safety and health in the workplace. Eaton, Marx & Bowie (2007) also found that various employee welfare programs in United States institutions affected employee's efforts to increase service delivery.

Specifically, the present study also demonstrates that other dimensions of employees' welfare such as pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social program are positively and significantly related to the productivity of the employees in the academic institutions in Nigeria. For example, the study revealed that pension and retirement plans are positively and significantly related to the productivity of the employees in the academic institutions (path coefficient=6.107;  $p < -0.000$  for pension plan; path coefficient=8.801;  $p < -0.000$  for retirement plan). The finding implies that employees' productivity would be high if they have pension plan and retirement plan for themselves. This finding collaborates Kadir, Shaharuddin, Kadaruddin, Azhan, Azmi, Lukman, & Adabi (2010), and Farnsworth (2004) which asserts that retirement plans are great contributor to the productivity of the employees in any organization.

Further findings also demonstrates that transport allowance and other social program positively and significantly influence the productivity of the employees in the academic institutions (path coefficient=5.325;  $p<0.000$  for transport allowance; path coefficient=4.604;  $p<0.000$  for other social program). For example, transport allowance or other social program like holiday, vacation, sports etc. are directly link with the productivity of the employees in the organisation. These welfare benefits have a way of facilitating the tasks employees perform thereby affecting their productivity. This is also supported by the motivational theories such as Frederick Herzberg theory (1959) and Abraham Maslow theory (1970) (Hamzah, Lucky & Joarder (2015). These theories believed that better performance is achieved if the employees are well motivated through good welfare packages. The finding by Haines, Davis, Rancour, Robinson, Wilson & Wagner (2007) alleged that health promotion programs have positively impacted on the welfare of employees and service delivery. Therefore, greater employees' performance could be achieved through good employees' welfare policies and programs within the academic institutions not only in Nigeria but in other part of the world.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

In conclusion, the study has provided additional insight into the influence employees' welfare on the productivity of the employees in the academic institutions. In other words, the study has succeeded in providing empirical evidence that apart from the employees' welfare as a whole negatively influence the productivity of the employees, certain specific dimensions of employees' welfare such as pension plan, retirement plan, transport allowance and other social programs positively and significantly influence employees' output particularly in the academic institutions as postulated by Frederick Herzberg theory (1959) and Abraham Maslow theory (1970) and equally supported by Hamzah, Lucky & Joarder (2015). The negative result on the employees welfare as a whole suggests that there may be some concerns about the welfare of the employees in the academic institutions when compare with those in the public organizations in Nigeria. These concerns should be identified and addressed because they have vital role to play in ensuring higher and positive productivity from the employees.

## **5.3 Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research**

Going by the direction of this present study which only focused on the academic institution in Nigeria, it does not means that scientific investigations should stop at this point. There may be need for further studies to be directed towards understanding the relationship between employees' welfare and employees' productivity in other different sectors or among big or foreign organisations operating in Nigeria. The reason being that large businesses may have more comprehensive employees and policies relating to employees' welfare, and this may a support some kind of indirect comparisons among them.

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