

## Attitude of Gratitude, Happiness and Life Satisfaction among College Students: Empirical Evidences from District Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan

Muhammad Inam<sup>1</sup>, Abdur Rahman<sup>2</sup> & Dr. Afzaal Afzal<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer (visiting) Department of Psychology, Zamindar Postgraduate College Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan, Email: [gender.inam@yahoo.com](mailto:gender.inam@yahoo.com)

<sup>2</sup>Social Worker, the Children's Hospital, University of Child Health Sciences, Lahore Email: [abdurrahmansocialworker@yahoo.com](mailto:abdurrahmansocialworker@yahoo.com)

<sup>3</sup>Community Development Officer, Housing Urban Development and Public Health Engineering Department, Punjab, Pakistan, Email: [afzaal.afzal2010@gmail.com](mailto:afzaal.afzal2010@gmail.com)

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received:	February	22, 2025
Revised:	April	02, 2025
Accepted:	April	04, 2025
Available Online:	April	06, 2025

#### Keywords:

Gratitude, Happiness, Life Satisfaction, College Students, Attitude of Gratitude, Well-being, Positive Psychology

#### Corresponding Author:

Dr. Afzaal Afzal

#### Email:

[afzaal.afzal2010@gmail.com](mailto:afzaal.afzal2010@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

Detrimental factors, such as trauma, stress, social isolation, and negative relationships, disrupt psycho-social well-being, cognitive health and contribute to psychopathology. Developments during recent decades in positive psychology have marked a significant shift in focus, from solely addressing cerebral disorder to actively promoting mental well-being. This paradigm shift has led researchers to identify and maximize factors that contribute to overall well-being, such as gratitude, resilience, and positive relationships. This study aimed to investigate the relationships between attitude of gratitude (AOG), happiness, and life satisfaction (LS) among college students. A total of 300 college students (150 males, 150 females) were randomly selected to participate. A correlational research design was employed to examine the relationships between the variables, using the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6), the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The results revealed a strong positive correlation between AOG and happiness, as well as between happiness and LS. These findings suggest that cultivating a positive attitude of gratitude is essential for enhancing happiness, which in turn promotes life satisfaction. The study's results have implications for the development of interventions aimed at fostering gratitude and promoting overall well-being and life satisfaction among college students.



## **Introduction**

Psychological research has traditionally focused on the detrimental factors that disrupt mental well-being (MWB) and contribute to psychopathology. However, recent developments in positive psychology have shifted attention to identifying and maximizing factors that promote well-being (Jamil et al., 2024). Gratitude has emerged as a key area of interest. As a dispositional tendency to appreciate and respond positively to the kindness of others and the good things in life, gratitude is recognized as a fundamental positive emotion that plays a crucial role in fostering interpersonal relationships and enhancing overall well-being (Aruni et al., 2023).

A substantial body of research has consistently demonstrated that gratitude is robustly correlated with increased happiness and life satisfaction, both of which are fundamental pillars of psychological well-being (El et al., 2024). Moreover, cultivating gratitude has been shown to augment emotional resilience, nurture more meaningful social connections, and alleviate negative emotions, thereby playing a pivotal role in fostering optimal mental health and overall well-being (Afzal et al., 2021; Mushtaq et al., 2024).

Despite the growing focus of research on well-being and gratitude, significant knowledge gap remains regarding how these elements intersect among college students (Gada et al., 2022). Existing studies have primarily focused on children and adolescents, with limited exploration of gratitude's impact on young adults, particularly in countries like Pakistan, where cultural and religious differences may influence the experience and expression of gratitude (Gulia et al., 2021). College students, who face significant life transitions and challenges, are at a critical stage where cultivating healthy attitudes like gratitude can have a profound impact on their mental health and life satisfaction (Ali et al., 2020).

This study aims to investigate the relationship between gratitude, happiness, and life satisfaction among Pakistani college students, with a particular focus on the Islamic perspective on gratitude as a means of promoting positive mental well-being, healthy relationships, and spiritual growth. By addressing this research gap, this study seeks to provide valuable insights for developing interventions that can enhance the well-being of young adults in Pakistan.

## **Literature Review**

A growing body of research has consistently demonstrated the beneficial effects of gratitude on happiness, life satisfaction, and overall well-being. Studies by Przepiorka and Sobol-Kwapinska (2020) and Salvador-Ferrer (2017) have found that individuals who practice gratitude tend to have higher levels of life satisfaction, with gratitude serving as a mediator between positive time perspectives and well-being. Furthermore, research among college students, such as the studies conducted by Byrne (2020) and Hemarajarajeswari & Gupta (2021), has shown that gratitude is positively correlated with mental health, psychological well-being, and happiness.

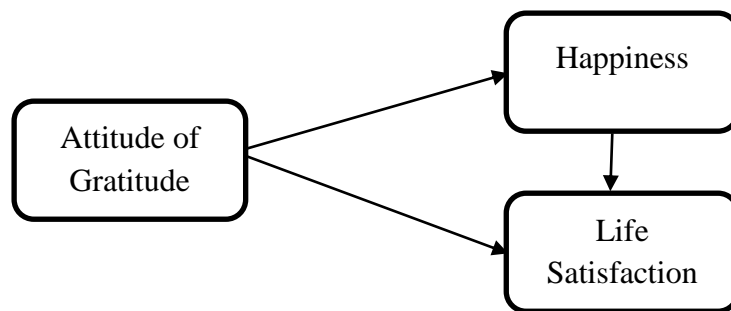
These findings suggest that gratitude interventions, such as journaling or other practices, can be effective tools for enhancing students' life satisfaction. Additionally, research has explored the role of gender in the relationship between gratitude and well-being, with studies indicating that females tend to exhibit higher levels of gratitude and life satisfaction (Khan, 2023; Salvador-Ferrer, 2017). Furthermore, cultural context has also been found to play a significant role, with research

conducted in various countries, including Pakistan, China, and Saudi Arabia, revealing that gratitude is a universal concept that transcends cultural boundaries in promoting well-being

Theoretical models, such as Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory and Seligman's PERMA model, provide insight into the mechanisms by which gratitude promotes life satisfaction. According to Fredrickson (1998), positive emotions like gratitude broaden individuals' awareness, strengthen their social connections, and foster long-term well-being. Similarly, Seligman's PERMA model (2012) posits that positive emotions, including gratitude, serve as foundational elements for achieving life satisfaction and psychological well-being

Furthermore, research by Kerry et al. (2023) and Aruni et al. (2023) revealed the mediating effects of social support and self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and life satisfaction, providing additional evidence for the crucial role these variables play in promoting well-being. In line with the existing literature on gratitude, inconsistent findings across experimental studies underscore the need for further research, particularly longitudinal studies, to elucidate the long-term effects of gratitude interventions across diverse populations.

### **Conceptual framework**



### **Methods and Material**

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationships between Attitude of Gratefulness (ATGR), Happiness, and Life Satisfaction (LS) among a sample of 300 university students (150 males and 150 females) aged 18-24 years from Jalalpur Jattan, who were selected using simple random sampling.

Participants completed a demographic form and three standardized measures the Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) to assess Attitude of Gratefulness (ATGR), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) to evaluate life satisfaction, and the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) to measure happiness. The study adhered to ethical principles, including obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring voluntary participation

The data collection process was carried out with the requisite approval from the college authorities, ensuring compliance with institutional protocols. Furthermore, participants' rights and privacy were safeguarded throughout the research procedure. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, guaranteeing their voluntary participation and anonymity. Participants were also assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequence. The researchers maintained confidentiality and ensured that all data collected were stored securely and in accordance with ethical guidelines. By upholding these ethical standards, the researchers demonstrated their commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of the participants

## Results and Major Findings

This chapter presents a statistical analysis, utilizing tables and graphs, to examine the correlations between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), Happiness, and Life Satisfaction (LS) among university students. The analysis began with descriptive statistics, reliability scores, and tests of normality to ensure the assumptions for further analysis were met. Pearson correlation coefficients were then calculated to determine the relationships between the variables. Additionally, regression analysis was conducted to investigate the predictive effects of the variables. Demographic information was visually represented using pie charts and bar graphs.

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of the Participants

Demographic characteristics		f	( %)
Gender	Male	150	50
	Female	150	50
Education	first sem	8	2.7
	Second sem	67	22.3
	Third sem	53	17.7
	four sem	79	26.3
	five sem	12	4.0
	Six sem	35	11.7
	Seven sem	6	2.0
	Eight sem	40	13.3
Father occupation	Abroad	34	11.3
	Jobian	83	27.7
	Self Employee	119	39.7
	Farmer	64	21.3
Mother occupation	House Wife	289	96.3
	Jobian	11	3.7

Table 1 highlighted the participants in this study comprised 300 university students, with an equal distribution of males and females (150 each, representing 50% of the total sample). In terms of their educational semester, the participants were distributed across various semesters, with the majority being in the second (22.3%), third (17.7%), and fourth (26.3%) semesters. The remaining participants were distributed across the first (2.7%), fifth (4%), sixth (11.7%), seventh (2%), and eighth (13.3%) semesters. Regarding their parents' occupations, the majority of the participants' fathers were self-employed (39.7%), followed by those who were employed (27.7%) and farmers (21.3%), while a smaller percentage worked abroad (11.3%). In contrast, the overwhelming majority of the participants' mothers were housewives (96.3%), with only a small percentage being employed (3.7%).

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics and Alpha reliability for all study variables (N=300)

Scales	K	M	SD	A	Range		skewness	Kurtosis
					Actual	Potential		
GS	6	28.77	4.68	.87	13-41	0-50	-0.488	0.311
LSS	5	18.23	5.12	0.87	4-28	0-30	-0.428	-0.239
GHS	4	4.55	1.22	0.97	1-7	1-7	-0.533	0.197

The table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for three scales: the Gratitude Scale (GS), the Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS), and the General Happiness Scale (GHS). The GS consists of 6 items, with a mean score of 28.77 and a standard deviation of 4.68. The scale demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87. The actual range of scores obtained by the participants was 13-41, with a potential range of 0-50. The skewness and kurtosis values indicated a slightly negatively skewed and platykurtic distribution.

The LSS comprises 5 items, with a mean score of 18.23 and a standard deviation of 5.12. The scale also demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87. The actual range of scores obtained by the participants was 4-28, with a potential range of 0-30. The skewness and kurtosis values indicated a slightly negatively skewed and platykurtic distribution.

The GHS consists of 4 items, with a mean score of 4.55 and a standard deviation of 1.22. The scale demonstrated extremely high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.97. The actual range of scores obtained by the participants was 1-7, which is the same as the potential range. The skewness and kurtosis values indicated a slightly negatively skewed and platykurtic distribution.

**Table 3:** Pearson correlation among variables used in the study

Variables	1	2	3
1.AOG	1	-	-
2.LS	.309**	1	-
3.GH	.281**	.350**	-

Table 3 presents the correlation matrix reveals significant positive relationships between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), Life Satisfaction (LS), and General Happiness (GH). Specifically, AOG is positively correlated with LS ( $r = 0.309^*$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and GH ( $r = 0.281$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that individuals with a more grateful attitude tend to experience higher life satisfaction and general happiness. Additionally, LS and GH are also positively correlated ( $r = 0.350^*$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that individuals who are more satisfied with their lives tend to experience greater overall happiness. These statistically significant correlations highlight the interconnectedness of these variables and suggest that cultivating a grateful attitude may have a positive impact on both life satisfaction and general happiness.

**Table 4:** Gender difference on study variables with mean, Standard deviation and t values

Variables	Female (N=150)		Male (N=150)		T	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
AOG	29.06	4.17	28.48	5.14	-1.07	.284	-1.64	.484	0.12
LS	19.14	4.34	17.32	5.66	-3.12	.002	-2.96	-.672	0.36
GH	4.57	1.23	4.52	1.22	-.364	.716	-.330	.227	0.04

Table 4 explains that an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the means of Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), Life Satisfaction (LS), and General Happiness (GH) between female (N=150) and male (N=150) participants. The results showed that there was no significant difference in AOG between females (M=29.06, SD=4.17) and males (M=28.48, SD=5.14),  $t(298)=-1.07$ ,  $p=.284$ . However, a significant difference was found in LS, with females (M=19.14, SD=4.34) reporting higher life satisfaction than males (M=17.32, SD=5.66),  $t(298)=-3.12$ ,  $p=.002$ . The effect size for this difference was moderate, with a Cohen's d of 0.36. In contrast, no

significant difference was found in GH between females (M=4.57, SD=1.23) and males (M=4.52, SD=1.22),  $t(298)=-.364$ ,  $p=.716$ . The effect size for this difference was negligible, with a Cohen's  $d$  of 0.04.

**Table 5:** Linear Regression for prediction of LFST from Attitude of gratitude for participants

Predictors	Model B	Outcome	
		95% CI	
		LL	UL
Constant	8.52***	5.06	11.97
AOG	.39***	.219	.456
R <sup>2</sup>	.09		
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	.09		

A linear regression analysis was conducted and presented in table 5 to examine the relationship between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG) and Life Satisfaction (LS). The results of the analysis are presented in the table. The model was significant, with a constant (intercept) of 8.52 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that the predicted value of LS is 8.52 when AOG is zero. The standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) for AOG was 0.39 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that for every one-unit increase in AOG, LS increases by 0.39 units. The 95% confidence interval (CI) for the coefficient ranged from 0.219 to 0.456, indicating that the true effect of AOG on LS is likely to lie within this range. The model explained 9% of the variance in LS ( $R^2 = 0.09$ ), and the addition of AOG to the model resulted in a significant increase in  $R^2$  ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.09$ ). Overall, the results suggest that AOG is a significant predictor of LS, and that individuals with a more grateful attitude tend to experience higher life satisfaction.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the relationships among Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), Happiness (H), and Life Satisfaction (LS) among college students. The study found that AOG had a positive correlation with both happiness and life satisfaction, thereby supporting the first hypothesis. This finding is consistent with previous research, which has demonstrated the direct and positive impact of gratefulness on life satisfaction and overall well-being (Sawaira Khan, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022; Yildirim & Alanazi, 2018). Specifically, the results showed that participants with a more grateful attitude reported higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction.

Moreover, the study investigated the mediating role of happiness in the relationship between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG) and life satisfaction. The findings confirm the second hypothesis, revealing that happiness significantly mediates the relationship between AOG and life satisfaction. This outcome aligns with previous research, which has underscored the importance of gratitude in enhancing mental well-being, thereby leading to increased life satisfaction (Aneta et al., 2020; Nicholas Kerry et al., 2023).

The study further explored gender differences in Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), happiness, and life satisfaction. The results revealed that female respondents reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to their male counterparts, which is consistent with previous research indicating that women tend to report greater satisfaction with life (Carmen Salvador-Ferrer, 2017). Notably, the study also found that AOG was a strong predictor of life satisfaction, with a more pronounced correlation observed among females. This finding aligns with existing research on

gender differences in gratefulness and life satisfaction, which suggests that women may derive greater benefits from gratefulness in terms of life satisfaction (Carmen Salvador-Ferrer, 2017).

This study provides robust evidence for the positive correlations between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), happiness, and life satisfaction, underscoring the vital importance of gratitude practices in enhancing individual well-being. The findings suggest that cultivating a grateful attitude can have a profound impact on both happiness and life satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a more fulfilling and meaningful life. By highlighting the significance of gratitude, this research emphasizes the need for intentional gratitude practices, such as reflection, journaling, and expressing appreciation, to be integrated into daily life. As such, this study contributes to the growing body of research on gratitude, providing valuable insights for individuals, practitioners, and policymakers seeking to promote well-being and positive mental health outcomes (Afzal et al., 2023).

### **Recommendations**

- 1. Representation of Broader Groups:** Future research would benefit from using more diverse and heterogeneous samples, extending beyond college students to include various age groups, professionals, and other demographics. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), happiness, and life satisfaction across different populations, enabling researchers to identify potential nuances and variations in these relationships.
- 2. Inclusion of Larger Sample Sizes:** To enhance the generalization of the findings, future studies are recommended to employ larger, more diverse sample sizes. This could include participants from various educational backgrounds, such as M.Phil and Ph.D. students, as well as individuals from different professions and walks of life. Additionally, using multiple data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups, would provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the relationships between Attitude of Gratefulness (AOG), happiness, and life satisfaction.
- 3. Intervention Studies:** Future research should investigate the impact of regular gratitude practices, such as weekly or monthly gratitude journaling, on life satisfaction and happiness. Intervention-based studies would provide valuable insights into the practical applications of gratitude for enhancing mental health and well-being. By examining the effects of intentional gratitude practices, researchers can develop evidence-based interventions that can be used to promote positive mental health outcomes and improve overall quality of life.
- 4. Investigating Other Well-Being Interventions:** Future research is also recommended to explore the effects of other well-being interventions, such as mindfulness practices, journaling, or acts of kindness, on mental well-being and life satisfaction. Investigating how these interventions interact with gratitude practices could provide valuable insights into potential synergies that may enhance the positive effects of gratitude on overall well-being.

Through systematic investigation in these areas, future studies can contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable interventions that harness the power of gratitude to enhance life satisfaction and happiness. By exploring the complex interplay between gratitude, well-being, and mental health, researchers can design more targeted and impactful interventions that promote positive outcomes and improve overall quality of life. Ultimately, this research has the potential to inform evidence-based practices that foster a culture of gratitude and well-being.

## References

1. Afzal, A., Safdar, S., & Hasan, S. (2021). Barriers to Female Education in Rural Areas: A Case Study of District Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan. *Ilkogretim Online*, 20(4) Volumes 20 (Issue 4): pp. 2240-2248. doi: 10.17051/ilkonline.2021.04.256
2. Afzal, A., Javed, M., & Safdar, S. (2023). Factors affecting wellbeing of young adults: A study of Gujrat city, Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2023.2225566>
3. Algoe, S. B. (2012). Find, remind, and bind: The functions of gratitude in everyday relationships. *Social and personality psychology compass*, 6(6), 455-469.
4. Ali, S. A., Ahmed, M., Bhatti, O. K., & Farooq, W. (2020). Gratitude and its conceptualization: An Islamic perspective. *Journal of religion and health*, 59(4), 1740-1753.
5. Aruni, V. C., Mugiarto, H., & Sugiyo, S. (2023). The Effect of Self-Compassion and Gratitude on University Students LFST: Social Support as the Mediator. *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling*, 12(3), 201-209.
6. Byrne, C. (2020). *Does practicing gratitude increase LFST, well-being and happiness among undergraduate students?* (Doctoral dissertation, Dublin, National College of Ireland).
7. Byrne, C. (2020). *Does practicing gratitude increase LFST, well-being and happiness among undergraduate students?* (Doctoral dissertation, Dublin, National College of Ireland).
8. Dambrun, M., Desprès, G., & Lac, G. (2012). Measuring happiness: from fluctuating happiness to authentic-durable happiness. *Frontiers in psychology*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00016>
9. Diener E, Emmons RA, Larsen RJ, Griffin S. The satisfaction with life scale. *J Pers Assess*. 1985;49(1):71–75. doi:10.1207/s15327752jpa4901\_13 12.
10. Diener E, Suh EM, Lucas RE, Smith HL. Subjective well-being: three decades of progress. *Psychol Bull*. 1999;125(2):276–302. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.125.2.276 13.
11. Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, andy J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of personality assessment*. 49(45), 71–75. <https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa490>
12. Diener, E., Inglehart, R., & Tay, L. (2013). Theory and validity of LFST scales. *Social indicators research*, 112(3), 497-527. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-012-0076-y>
13. Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2003). Personality, culture, and subjective well being: Emotional and cognitive evaluations of life. *Annual review of psychology*, 54(1), 403-425. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.54.101601.145056>
14. Eid M, Diener E. Global judgments of subjective well-being: situational variability and long-term stability. *Soc Indic Res*. 2004;65(3):245–277. doi:10.1023/b:soci.0000003801.89195.bc
15. El Keshky, M. E. S., & Sarour, E. O. (2024). The relationships between work-family conflict and LFST and happiness among nurses: a moderated mediation model of gratitude and self-compassion. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 12, 1340074.
16. Emmons, R. A., & Crumpler, C. A. (2000). Gratitude as a human strength: Appraising the evidence. *Journal of social and clinical psychology*, 19(1), 56-69.
17. Emmons, R. A., & Crumpler, C. A. (2000). Gratitude as a human strength: Appraising the evidence. *Journal of social and clinical psychology*, 19(1), 56-69.
18. Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (Eds.). (2004). *The psychology of gratitude*. Oxford University Press.



19. Fredrickson, B. L. (1998). What good are positive emotions?. Review of general psychology, 2(3), 300-319. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.3.300>
20. Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. American psychologist, 56(3), 218. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218>
21. Gada, M., & Joshi, M. P. (2022). A Research on the Correlation between Gratitude and LFST. *A Research on the Correlation Between Gratitude and LFST*.
22. Gilman, R., & Huebner, S. (2003). A review of LFST research with children and adolescents. School Psychology Quarterly, 18(2), 192
23. Gordon, A. M., Impett, E. A., Kogan, A., Oveis, C., & Keltner, D. (2012). To have and to hold: gratitude promotes relationship maintenance in intimate bonds. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 103(2), 257
24. Gore, S., & Aseltine Jr, R. H. (2003). Race and ethnic differences in depressed mood following the transition from high school. Journal of health and social behavior, 370-389. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1519785>
25. Gulia P. (2021). Gratitude and LFST among Young Adults. International Journal of Indian Psychology, 9(2), 2014-2022. DOI: 10.25215/0902.200
26. Haddara, M., Imam, P., Al-Noor, M., & Mattson, I. (2021). Gratitude in Islam.
27. Hemarajareswari, J., & Gupta, P. K. (2021). Gratitude, psychological well-being, and happiness among college students: a correlational study. *Terapan*, 5(2), 260-270.
28. Hemarajareswari, J., & Gupta, P. K. (2021). Gratitude, psychological well-being, and happiness among college students: a correlational study. *Terapan*, 5(2), 260-270
29. Jamil, E., Sunbal, M., Afzal, A., & Mushtaq, M, F. (2024) A Comparative Analysis of Learning Problems experienced by the Students of Government and Private Schools. PAKISTAN ISLAMICU (An International Journal of Islamic and Social Sciences), Volume:04, Issue:01, P 221-230
30. Mushtaq, F, M., Jamil, E., Sunbal, M., and Afzal, A. (2024) Challenges Confronted by Primary School Teachers in Classroom Learning Environment. International Journal of Social Science Archives. April - June, 2024, 7(2), 320-326, ISSN: 2707-8892, Available at [www.ijssa.com](http://www.ijssa.com)