



Internal and External Factors That Influence Students' Attention During Learning

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze the internal and external factors that influence students' attention during the learning process at SDN 1 Sukoharjo. Based on experience and observation during the Teaching Assistance program, it is found that students' attention is strongly influenced by their physical condition, interest, learning readiness, and emotional state as internal factors. Meanwhile, external factors that play an important role include the physical environment of the classroom, learning methods and media, and the quality of interaction between teachers and students. Each class shows different attention dynamics, ranging from an active but less directed class, to a quiet but less focused class. The role of the teacher is crucial in creating a pleasant and adaptive learning atmosphere according to students' needs. The findings illustrate that managing student attention requires a holistic approach that considers various factors simultaneously. The implications of this research are expected to help teachers and prospective educators in designing effective learning strategies to improve student attention and learning outcomes.

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1. Introduction

Student attention during the learning process is a crucial aspect that greatly influences the success of teaching and learning in schools. Optimal attention allows students to absorb information effectively, understand the material deeply, and improve academic performance significantly (Pratiwi 2015). According to Wibowo (2021), attention is a cognitive process that focuses mental resources on a particular stimulus so that information can be processed better. In addition, research by Resita (2023) confirms that attention plays an important role in regulating the executive functions of the brain that support learning and decision-making abilities. Thus, attention is not only a psychological phenomenon, but also the main foundation in achieving optimal learning outcomes.

However, in practice, students' attention during learning often decreases, especially in the digital era that is full of distractions. Easy access to technological devices such as smartphones and social media is one of the main causes of reduced student focus in the classroom (Ramadhani et al. 2025). In addition, monotonous and less interactive learning methods also contribute to low student attention (Susanti et al. 2024). This condition is a challenge for teachers to create an interesting learning atmosphere and be able to maintain student attention for a long time. Therefore, innovation in teaching methods is needed to overcome this problem (Ardiansyah 2021).

Factors that influence student attention can be categorized into internal and external factors. Internal factors include students' motivation, interest, physical and psychological conditions (Zuschaiya 2024). Students with high learning motivation and strong interest in the subject matter tend to be better able to maintain focus during learning (Rahman and Fuad 2024). Conversely, unhealthy physical conditions, such as fatigue or health problems, as well as psychological conditions such as stress and anxiety can reduce the level of attention. Therefore, internal factors are an important aspect that must be considered in an effort to improve student attention.

Meanwhile, external factors come from the environment around students, including the role of teachers, classroom atmosphere, family support, and peer influence (Umar et al. 2023). A conducive learning environment, such as a comfortable classroom with minimal distractions, can improve student focus (Simbolon, Taofik, and Soleh 2025). The role of the teacher is also very decisive, especially in terms of using varied and interactive learning methods, as well as the ability to build effective communication with students (Kurniawan and Aryani 2024). In addition, family support and a positive social environment can motivate students to study more seriously (Nurgiyanti and Syah 2025).

Wahab and Rosnawati's (2011) research shows that students' attention during learning is influenced by feelings of pleasure towards the learning process, as well as the habit of repeating lessons at home. This finding is in line with the results of a study by Papatungan and Papatungan (2023) which emphasized the importance of emotional and behavioral involvement in increasing student attention. In addition, research by Maulia (2023) also shows that students' engagement in learning activities is closely related to their attention and motivation. Thus, student attention is the result of a complex interaction between various internal and external factors that influence each other.

Although many studies have addressed the factors that influence student attention, there is still a gap in studies that integrate both internal and external aspects simultaneously. Most studies only focus on one of the factors, thus not providing a complete picture of how the two factors interact in influencing student attention. In reality, student attention is the result of a combination of factors that are interrelated and cannot be separated (Jampel 2016).

The urgency of this research is even higher considering that student attention is the main prerequisite for achieving optimal learning outcomes (MEGAWATI 2009). By understanding the factors that influence attention, teachers, parents and schools can design more effective and efficient learning strategies. This is important to improve the quality of education and help students face the challenges of learning in the modern era of distraction.

This study aims to comprehensively identify and analyze the internal and external factors that influence students' attention during learning. By knowing the dominant factors that influence attention, it is expected that targeted learning strategies can be formulated and can improve the quality of student learning in schools (Abidin 2017). In addition, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of educational theory and practice, especially in the fields of educational psychology and classroom management (Aini and Hadi 2023).

Thus, this research is expected to provide a clearer and deeper picture of the dynamics of student attention during learning and the factors that play a role in influencing

it. This is very important to support efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, especially in facing the challenges of an increasingly complex and dynamic era (Pare and Sihotang 2023).

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to describe systematically and in depth the phenomena that occur related to internal and external factors that influence student attention during learning. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to obtain data in the form of words, behaviors, and experiences of students naturally without manipulation of variables (Ratnaningtyas et al. 2023). With this method, researchers focus on understanding the social context and real conditions in the field through observation, interviews, and documentation. Additional explanation: In descriptive qualitative research, researchers do not intervene or carry out certain treatments, but only describe and analyze what happens naturally in the research environment. This type of research is very suitable for topics that still require in-depth mapping and understanding, such as factors that affect student attention (Simanjuntak et al. 2024).

The object of the research is students at SDN 1 Sukoharjo who are the main subjects in the learning process at the school. This research was conducted in the environment of SDN 1 Sukoharjo as a representative location to observe how internal factors such as student motivation and psychological conditions as well as external factors such as the role of teachers, classroom atmosphere, and family support affect student attention. The scope of the study includes classroom learning activities and social interactions that occur during the teaching and learning process. The researcher chose SDN 1 Sukoharjo because this school has diverse student characteristics and a dynamic learning environment, so it can provide a comprehensive picture of the various factors that influence student attention. In addition, by focusing on students as the main subjects, researchers can explore their experiences and perceptions more deeply.

The data collection techniques used include direct observation in the classroom to see the conditions and dynamics of student attention, in-depth interviews with students and teachers to explore their experiences and views, and documentation studies in the form of learning records and other supporting data (Sumarto and Nahar 2024). Observations were conducted in a participatory manner, where researchers were directly present in the classroom to record behaviors, interactions, and situations that affect student attention. Interviews were semi-structured to allow researchers to explore students' and teachers' answers more flexibly and in depth. Documentation studies include analyzing teachers' daily notes, students' assignment results, and other documents relevant to the learning process.

The data collected was then analyzed descriptively with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion verification in order to obtain a complete and valid picture of the factors that influence student attention during learning at SDN 1 Sukoharjo. Data analysis was carried out by reading and understanding all the data collected, then grouping the data into main themes, such as internal and external factors. Furthermore, researchers looked for patterns, relationships, and differences that emerged from the data, and drew conclusions based on these findings (Majid 2017). To maintain data validity, researchers used triangulation, which is comparing data from various sources and data collection techniques.

3. Results and Discussion

This research was conducted based on our experience as Teaching Assistance students from the State University of Malang who were placed at SDN 1 Sukoharjo. During our assisting activities, we directly observed the dynamics of learning in various classes. Our main focus was to identify the internal and external factors that influence students'

attention during the learning process. Our findings show that student attention is strongly influenced by a combination of internal and external factors.

Each class shows different characteristics in terms of attention to learning. In some classes, students seem to enjoy the learning activities, but instead are engrossed in themselves without following the teacher's directions. They actively talk to their classmates or play with stationery, even when the explanation is taking place. This phenomenon illustrates how internal factors such as student interest and motivation can play a role, but without proper management of the classroom environment, their attention is easily distracted. Meanwhile, there are classes that initially appear orderly and attentive, but students in them often lose focus suddenly, such as leaving the classroom without permission or turning their attention outside the window. There are also classes where the atmosphere is calm, students sit in an orderly manner, but upon further investigation, their attention to the material presented is very low. This shows that student attention is not only influenced by external behavior, but also by internal conditions such as mental readiness and understanding of previous material.

In these conditions, the role of the teacher becomes very important. We saw how teachers at SDN 1 Sukoharjo had to go the extra mile, not only to deliver the material, but also to actively manage the class to keep students' attention focused on the learning process. Teachers' efforts include changes in teaching methods, the use of interesting learning media, and personal approaches to certain students who appear to have difficulty in focusing their attention. This is in line with the importance of external factors that support student attention, such as a conducive classroom atmosphere and varied learning methods, which can increase student engagement and focus.

Based on our observations, the internal factors that most influence student attention at SDN 1 Sukoharjo include physical condition, interest in learning and mental readiness. Some students come to school tired or lacking enthusiasm, which can be seen from the look on their faces and inactivity in class activities. This poor physical condition greatly affects their ability to pay attention to the teacher's explanation. In addition, not all students have a high interest in certain subjects. When the material presented is not in accordance with their interests, their attention quickly moves to other things. Mental readiness is also crucial. Students who have not understood the previous material tend to be passive and not pay attention because they feel unable to follow the lesson. This finding reinforces that internal factors such as motivation, interest, and psychological conditions are important aspects that must be considered in an effort to improve student attention.

Externally, the classroom atmosphere, learning methods, and interactions between teachers and students are important determinants of student attention. Classes that are too hot or noisy from outside make students easily distracted and lose focus. Teachers who only rely on the lecture method or reading textbooks tend to make students quickly bored and less engaged. However, when teachers start using media such as pictures, short videos, or simple educational games, students' attention seems to increase significantly. In addition, the way teachers interact is also very influential. Teachers who are warm, respectful and provide opportunities to ask questions or have opinions are able to create a conducive and interesting learning atmosphere for students. However, we also observed that maintaining students' attention remained a challenge, even when media and methods were varied. This shows that students' attention is dynamic and requires continuous maintenance during learning.

In addition to these factors, we also found that students' attention is strongly influenced by their emotional and social conditions in the classroom. Students who feel comfortable and valued tend to find it easier to focus and actively participate in learning. In contrast, students who experience social pressure, such as conflicts with peers or feeling less cared for by the teacher, often show a decrease in attention. Therefore, aspects of interpersonal relationships and the emotional atmosphere in the classroom are an

important part that must be considered in an effort to improve student attention. This confirms that students' attention is not only a matter of cognitive and physical aspects, but is also strongly influenced by their psychosocial conditions while in the learning environment.

From this discussion, we know that students' attention during learning is influenced by a combination of internal factors from within them and external factors from the surrounding environment. Internal factors such as motivation, interest, physical condition, and mental readiness determine students' ability to maintain focus, while external factors such as classroom atmosphere, teaching methods, and teacher-student interaction are the main support for maintaining attention. Therefore, teachers need to be highly sensitive to each student's condition and be able to design adaptive and interesting learning. In the context of SDN 1 Sukoharjo, extra effort from teachers to maintain students' attention is very important, especially because each class has unique challenges. This article is an important reflection for us as future educators to understand that student attention is not something that can be taken for granted, but must be built with consistent and conscious effort.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of observation and analysis during the implementation of the Teaching Assistance program at SDN 1 Sukoharjo, it can be concluded that student attention in learning is strongly influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. The dominant internal factors include students' physical condition, interest, learning readiness, and emotional state. Meanwhile, external factors include the physical environment of the classroom, learning methods and media, and the quality of interaction between teachers and students. Each class shows different dynamics. There are classes that seem active but undirected, classes that look calm but lack focus, and classes that are responsive but easily distracted. This shows that student attention fluctuates and is strongly influenced by the learning approach used.

The role of the teacher is crucial in maintaining and building student attention. Teachers are not only required to deliver material, but also to create a learning atmosphere that is fun, interactive, and in accordance with student characteristics. Teachers must also be adaptive and sensitive to the needs of individual and group students.

As Teaching Assistance students from the State University of Malang, this experience enriched our understanding that successful learning is not only determined by the content of the material, but also by how the teacher is able to manage student attention through appropriate and empathetic strategies.

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