

Attention

introduction :

Attention, in psychology, the concentration of awareness on some phenomenon to the exclusion of other stimuli.

Attention is awareness of the here and now in a focal and perceptive way. For early psychologists, such as Edward Bradford Titchener, attention determined the content of consciousness and influenced the quality of conscious experience. In subsequent years less emphasis was placed on the subjective element of consciousness and more on the behaviour patterns by which attention could be recognized in others. Although human experience is determined by the way people direct their attention, it is evident that they do not have complete control over such direction. There are, for example, times when an individual has difficulty concentrating attention on a task, a conversation, or a set of events. At other times an individual's attention is "captured" by an unexpected event rather than voluntarily directed toward it.

1- Definition:

Attention is the ability to actively process specific information in the environment while tuning out other details. Attention is limited in terms of both capacity and duration, so it is important to have ways to effectively manage the attentional resources we have available in order to make sense of the world.

2- Types of Attention

There are many different types of attention that people may use. Some of these include:

2-1 Sustained Attention:

This form of attention, also known as concentration, is the ability to focus on one thing for a continuous period. During this time, people keep their focus on the task at hand and continue to engage in a behavior until the task is complete or a certain period of time has elapsed.

2-1 Alternating Attention:

This type of attention involves multitasking or effortlessly shifting attention between two or more things with different cognitive demands.³

Hennawy M, Sabovich S, Liu CS, Herrmann N, Lanctôt KL. Sleep and attention in Alzheimer's Disease. . It's not about focusing on more than one thing at the same time, but about stopping attending to one thing and then switching to the next task.

2-3 Selective Attention:

Since attention is a limited resource, we have to be selective about what we decide to focus on. Not only must we focus our attention on a specific item in our environment, but we must also filter out an enormous number of other items.

2-4 Focused Attention:

This type of attention involves being able to be suddenly drawn to a specific visual, auditory, or tactile stimuli such as a loud noise or a flash of light. It is a way of responding rapidly to external stimuli, which can be particularly important in situations where something in the environment requires immediate attention and quick action.

2-5 Limited Attention:

Limited attention, or divided attention, is a form of attention that also involves multitasking. In this case, however, attention is divided between multiple tasks.

Rather than shifting focus, people attend to these stimuli at the same time and may respond simultaneously to multiple demands.

2-6 Improving Attention:

For the most part, our ability to focus our attention on one thing while blocking out competing distractors seems automatic. Yet the ability of people to selectively focus their attention on a specific subject while dismissing others is very complex.

3- the Factors Influencing Attention:

Attention is a process but not a product. It helps in the cognizance of our environment, which is of a particular kind because, at a particular time, one can focus our responsiveness on a particular object only. There are controlling factors that influence attention. These are the external factors and are usually dependent on the features of stimuli. They can be categorized as nature of the stimulus, intensity and size of the stimulus, contrast, change, variety, movement of the stimulus, etc. The internal factors influence attention using interest, motive, etc.

3-1 External Factors (External Determiners)

These are

- **Intensity of the Stimuli** – The greater the intensity of the stimulus Then more likely a person will be drawn toward it. Our attention will be more easily drawn toward a bright light, strong smell or loud sound, etc.
- **Size** –The larger the stimulus, the more attention will be drawn toward it. For example, a truck will draw more attention than a scooter or smaller vehicle.
- **Motion of the Stimuli** – A moving stimulus gets more attention than a static one, and a person is more sensitive to something moving in his/her field of vision. For example, a moving person draws more attention than

someone standing still. Advertisers take help of this fact and catch more attention towards them by using moving electric lights.

- **Contrast, change, variety** – Variety, and uniqueness catch more attention than the monotonous surroundings, i.e., different from the environment. For example, a word or a sentence in a paragraph, if written in different color or font, will catch more attention than the list of the document. If a clock suddenly stops ticking, we will only pay attention to it. The factor contrast or change is more highly responsible for capturing attention than the stimulus's intensity, size, or nature.
- **Repetition of the Stimuli** – Repetition is a significant factor as it secures greater attention. Because a person can ignore a thing for once but cannot if it is repeated multiple times. For example, when a teacher repeats the same text from a book, the students get more attentive toward it. A miss-spelled word is more noticeable if repeated several times than if it occurs only once.
- **Duration and degree Of the Stimuli** – Greater attention will be drawn to that stimulus which will last longer. For example, disaster warning alarm or siren, vehicle's horn sound for a longer time, etc.
- **Novelty** – Something brand / new gets more attention than traditional ones. For example, a new teacher in a school gets more attention from the students in the school.

3-2 Internal Factors or Subjective Factors:

These are

- **Interest** – Interest is the most important factor in attention. We show more attention towards those things to which we have greater attention, which is visible in our daily lives. We watch TV shows or movies of great interest because we are interested in that thing.
- **Motives** – Our basic motives help to draw attention. Factors like thirst, hunger, curiosity, and fear affect attention. For example, a thirsty person is more attracted to water than anything else.
- **Mindset** – A person's readiness to reply to any stimulus makes that person more attentive. For example, if a student was expecting an examination, then if the timetable of the exam suddenly got out, it will surely draw more attention to that particular student.

- **Moods and Attitudes** – The things to whom we are attending are always influenced by the person's moods and attitudes. For example, an angry person easily points out a person's mistake. In the same, our positive and negative attitudes determine attention.
- **Desire** – A person's desire become a major cause of paying attention to something. For example, a student who wants to be a cricketer in the future will pay more attention to his cricket practices.
- **Aim/ Goal** – Each person has an ultimate goal in his/her life. For example, a student to pass the exam with good marks will pay more attention to his books and exams.
- **Past experiences** – From past experiences, if we can determine that a particular person is sincere to us, we will pay more attention to him/her. In this way, an effective stimulus is always chosen to draw maximum attention.
- **Organic State** – The physical state of the person, like tiredness, discomfort, sickness, etc., also plays a role in giving attention. Again, if a person is in a state of survival, he or she will pay attention to the stimuli related to the resources of survival.
- **Emotion** – Stimuli that call on stronger emotion attract greater attention. Although positive emotions lead to better focus, negative emotions lead to poor concentration.