Storytelling as a strategy for developing student concentration in non-formal schools

William Winanto[1], Widiyanto[2], Komang Sutawan[3]

[1,3]Buddhist Education Department, Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung, Indonesia

[2]Buddhist Communication Science Department, Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung, Indonesia

Email: williamwinanto@sekha.kemenag.go.id

Abstract: Children's concentration in learning is an important factor in the success of the learning process, especially in non-formal educational environments such as Buddhist Sunday School (SMB). One approach that can be used to improve children's concentration is the storytelling approach. This study aims to determine the effect of the storytelling approach on the concentration of Mahakusala SMB children in understanding the Buddhist teachings delivered in class. The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with an observational research design and the use of a questionnaire as a concentration measurement tool. The subjects in this study were 30 children aged 10–13 years old from Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB). Based on data collected through direct observation during the storytelling process and the completion of questionnaires that had been tested for validity and reliability, the findings highlight the potential of storytelling not only as an engaging teaching strategy but also as a practical tool for improving student focus. Applying the storytelling approach in other Buddhist Sunday schools (SMB) can produce similar improvements, supporting educators in fostering better attention and deeper understanding among students. The results of this study show a positive and significant effect of the storytelling approach on children's concentration. This is evidenced by an R square value of 0.973, which means that 97.3% of the variation in children's concentration can be explained by the use of the storytelling approach, while 2.7% is influenced by other factors. Thus, the storytelling approach has been proven to be more effective in improving children's concentration in learning activities at Mahakusala SMB and can be recommended for use as the main strategy in Dhamma learning.

Keywords: Storytelling, Children's Concentration, Buddhist Sunday School

1. Introduction

In general, education is a conscious and planned process carried out to support the learning process of students and to develop their potential. In the field of education, there are several important points, namely religion, self-control, personality, science, knowledge/insight, and skills. Education can take place formally, non-formally, or informally. Education has a very important main objective, namely to develop individual potential, increase intelligence, shape character, and equip a person with the skills needed in life [[1], [2], [3]].

Buddhist Religious Education is education that prepares students to be able to carry out roles that require mastery of knowledge about Buddhist teachings and practise their religious teachings. Buddhist religious education has the main objective of shaping the character of students to become individuals who are faithful, moral, and have a deep understanding of Buddhist teachings in developing the ability of students to accept and appreciate Buddhist values, as well as the values of Pancasila contained in Buddhist religious education [4].

Concentration is an important aspect of the learning process. Children with good concentration tend to receive information more easily, understand the material, and complete learning tasks more effectively. However, not all children have a high level of concentration, especially those aged 10-13 years, which is a transitional period from childhood to early adolescence, where children's focus can be easily distracted by external stimuli.

Concentration is the ability to observe what is being observed [5]. Explains that concentration in early childhood has stages to measure the ability to practise concentration in early childhood at 4-5 years of age in directing attention to an activity for ±12-15 minutes in accordance with the child's developmental stage [6]. From the opinions of the experts above, it can be concluded that concentration is something that is done by focusing one's mind and full attention on an idea or concept in an object to change the behaviour of children in the Sunday school learning process.

In Buddhist teachings, concentration has four foundations of mindfulness that practitioners must develop to attain enlightenment as described in the Mahasatipatthana Sutta [7]. The four foundations are attention to the body by being aware of breathing, attention to feelings by observing emotional experiences, attention to thoughts by being aware of the state of mind, and attention to objects of thought by contemplating mental phenomena, which consists of concentration to gain deep insight into reality and the path to liberation.

According to Dimyati and Mudjiono [8], learning concentration is defined as a child's ability to focus their attention and thoughts on the learning process. This focus of attention is directed at the content of the learning material or the process of acquiring it. A child's ability to concentrate their thoughts during learning is greatly influenced by several factors, namely age, learning environment, teaching methods, and the child's interest in receiving the material being studied and delivered by the teacher. In SMB children, concentration can be influenced by several spiritual aspects and Buddhist values that are taught, such as meditation or full attention to the object being observed (mindfulness).In children, especially in the context of learning at SMB, concentration is very important for understanding the Buddhist teachings and values being taught. Concentration has several main characteristics [9], namely: the ability to focus while learning, memory, information processing, the influence of the environment on concentration, habits & strategies for improving concentration.

According to Buddhist teachings, the Vitakkasanthana Sutta [10] explains that there are five methods for overcoming distracting thoughts during meditation, which are important in developing concentration, including: shifting attention from bad thoughts

to good thoughts, understanding the dangers and negative effects of negative thoughts, not paying attention to distracting thoughts, understanding the source of negative thoughts, and using strong determination to stop negative thoughts.

Concentration is very important in various aspects of life, such as studying, working, exercising, and meditating, because it allows a person to understand, remember, and complete tasks more effectively and efficiently. In the context of education, concentration in learning refers to the ability of students to focus their minds or attention on the material in the learning process so that they can absorb and understand information effectively and efficiently [8], [11]. In Buddhist teachings, Buddha explains the Anapanasati Sutta (M.I.18) regarding the practice of paying attention to breathing as a method for developing concentration and full awareness in focusing attention on the breathing process. Practitioners can achieve peace of mind and a deep understanding of the nature of phenomena.

When a person can maintain good concentration during learning, they can focus better and follow the subject matter more effectively. Some of the main benefits of concentration according to [13]. are increased productivity, improved problem-solving skills, improved memory, improved academic performance, and increased motivation to learn. In Buddhist teachings, concentration is described in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta [14], which recounts how on his last day, the Buddha emphasised the importance of morality (sila), concentration (samadhi), and wisdom (panna). The Buddha also explained that concentration supported by morality will produce enormous benefits and wisdom supported by concentration will produce great fruits. Concentration in early childhood refers to a child's ability to focus their mind and attention on one thing while setting aside all other unrelated things.

Buddhist Sunday School (SMB) is generally a non-formal school organised by the community, organisations or Buddhist religious institutions with the aim of providing knowledge and instilling moral values from an early age. Through these activities, children are taught Buddhist values, such as morality, concentration, and wisdom. However, in the learning process, challenges are often encountered related to the level of concentration of children during the activities [11], [15].

SMB Mahakusala is a Sunday school located at Cetiya Mahakusala Poris. SMB is held every Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The educators are panditas and devotees who wish to share their knowledge of Buddhist teachings and care about the spiritual growth of children. SMB students are taught to chant the , lead worship services, do activities, play games, and organise events. The teaching methods used include lectures, storytelling, and play. Several factors are thought to influence children's concentration, including teaching methods, the learning environment, and the level of readiness of children to receive and understand the lessons.

In addition, the influence of technology and modern lifestyles can also be major factors that can reduce children's concentration levels in focusing on Sunday School classes. Concentration can be an important aspect of learning, especially in the context of Buddhism, which emphasises the importance of meditation and inner peace. Children

who have good concentration tend to be better able to understand the teachings more deeply and apply Buddhist values in their daily lives [16].

The storytelling approach was chosen because it is considered capable of creating a fun and meaningful learning atmosphere, as well as helping children to focus more on listening and understanding the message being conveyed. Buddhist stories and contemporary stories that contain moral values, when delivered with interesting storytelling techniques, are believed to strengthen children's concentration.

Storytelling is the practice of conveying stories or narratives to convey information, values, or entertainment. According to an article published in Educational Research Review, storytelling can increase student engagement and facilitate the understanding of complex concepts [17], [18]. In Buddhist teachings, storytelling is one of the practices used by the Buddha in expounding the Dhamma through the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta [20], which contains the first sermon given by the Buddha after attaining enlightenment to five ascetics in the Isipatana Deer Park, near Benares. This sutta also explains how the Buddha introduced the concepts of the Middle Way, the Four Noble Truths, and the Noble Eightfold Path.

Storytelling is a communication process that involves conveying information through storytelling with the aim of telling a story, delivering a message, entertaining, educating, or building emotional connections [18], [19]. Storytelling is not limited to oral forms but can also be done through writing, images, movements, sounds, or digital technology that can be applied in various fields, such as education, marketing, psychology, and entertainment.

Storytelling can be applied across various fields using different approaches, such as using personal stories or Jataka narratives to capture the audience's attention, conveying stories through story-based content creation on social media, creating a more immersive storytelling experience through virtual reality technology, or using role-playing to understand situations from an effective and efficient perspective.

The storytelling approach can be verbal, written, visual, or digital and can be used in various fields, such as education, business, marketing, art, and even therapy [17], [20]. Through this storytelling approach, presenters can incorporate effective and efficient elements, such as characters and storylines, and use appropriate media so that the stories created or conveyed are well received and understood by readers or audiences.

Storytelling is a practice that has been used since ancient times to convey information, messages, values, or entertainment through communication or storytelling [19], [21]. In Abhaya Sutta, Buddha explains that one must speak, tell stories, or preach in a manner that is good, true, useful, or appropriate. In the context of human educational communication, storytelling has been an important part of culture from ancient times to the present day, using oral traditions, mythology, and art. In the modern world, storytelling can be a powerful technique in marketing, education, and even therapy to convey experiences in a way that is interesting and useful to the audience.

Based on the results of a preliminary study conducted by the researcher on 18 March 2025 with the head of SMB Mahakusala, there are several causes of children's declining concentration in classroom learning, including: lack of concentration can cause children

to have difficulty understanding and absorbing material in order to participate effectively in activities, lack of active involvement of children in classroom activities, children often playing with friends in class, children often running around when the presenter is giving a lecture or story, a decline in children's concentration levels in class, children in class being unable to sit still, children tending to be noisy in class during learning, children being unable to answer the teacher's questions in class, children not understanding the teacher's explanations in class, and children not caring about learning in class. This study aims to analyse the factors that affect the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School and to find appropriate solutions to improve the effectiveness of learning. By understanding the factors that contribute to this problem, it is hoped that more effective teaching strategies can be designed so that children can learn more optimally and gain a better understanding of Buddhism.

2. Method

The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with an observational research design and the use of a questionnaire as a concentration measurement tool [24], [25]. Furthermore, the data obtained can be analysed using validity and reliability instrument analysis techniques. The activities carried out were observation, title submission, thesis proposal preparation, proposal seminar, guidance, results seminar, and thesis examination. Then, data validity was checked using techniques. The subjects in this study were 30 Mahakusala Sunday School children aged 10–13 years. Data were collected through direct observation during the storytelling process and by filling out questionnaires that had been tested for validity and reliability. This study was conducted at Mahakusala Sunday School from February to July 2025 with the research subjects being Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School children.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 *Instrument Validity Test*

Based on the instrument validity test conducted on Sunday, 20 April 2025, at the Bodhisattva Buddhist Sunday School (SMB) with 30 child respondents and 80 statement items consisting of 40 statement items regarding the *storytelling* approach variable and 40 statement items regarding child concentration. The results for the *storytelling* approach variable showed that 36 items were valid and 4 items were invalid. The invalid items were number 8 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.289, number 14 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.357, number 21 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.276, and number 33 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.341. In the child concentration variable, there are 36 valid items and 4 invalid items. The invalid items were number 5 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.357, number 11 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.342, number 17 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.311, and number 38 with an $r_{(calculated)}$ value of 0.209.

Several items were declared invalid by comparing r_{table} in 30 respondents with a significance level of 0.05, namely 0.361. If $r_{count} \leq r$ table, then the item is not declared valid. Invalid statement items must be removed by the researcher because the other

statement items already represent each statement indicator, so that out of 80 statement items, there are still 72 statement items used in the study.

3.2   *Reliability Test of the Storytelling Approach Instrument*

Based on the reliability test of the storytelling approach research instrument, the reliability coefficient results for the 36 items that have been declared valid were obtained. The reliability statistics results using SPSS 19 produced a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.957 because the significance value was > 0.05, meaning that the measuring instrument was declared reliable. It can be concluded that the research instrument used in this study has met the requirements for good reliability.

Table 3.1 Reliability Test of *the Storytelling* Approach Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.957	36

Source: Data processing results, 2025 using SPSS 19

3.3   *Child Concentration Instrument Reliability Test*

Based on the reliability test of the child concentration research instrument, the reliability coefficient results for 36 items that have been declared valid can be obtained. The reliability statistics results using SPSS 19 produced a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.948 because the significance value was > 0.05, meaning that the measuring instrument was declared reliable. It can be concluded that the research instrument used in this study has met the requirements for good reliability.

Table 3.2 Reliability Test of the Child Concentration Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.948	36

Source: Data processing results, 2025 using SPSS 19

3.4   *Normality Test*

The purpose of conducting a normality test is to determine whether the distribution of residual values is normal or not. This normality test is conducted using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The sample data is required to come from a normally distributed population with a significance level of 0.05 or 5%. Based on the normality test results obtained from 30 respondents, the significance value (2-tailed) is 0.871, which means $0.871 > 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. The normality calculation results using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test are shown in the following table:

Table 3.3 Normality Test Results

	Unstandardised Residual
N	30

Normal Parameters [a, b]	Mean	.000000
	Standard Deviation	2.86994553
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.109
	Positive	.085
	Negative	-.109
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.595
Asymptotic Significance (two-tailed)		.871

Source: Data processing results, 2025 using SPSS 19

Data processing results for normality testing can be seen from the p plot, which is a normality test conducted to test whether the regression model of independent and dependent variables has a normal distribution or not. A good regression model is one in which the data has a normal or near-normal distribution. To determine whether it is normal or not, look at the distribution of data (points) on the diagonal axis. The basis for decision making is as follows.

1) f the data is scattered around the diagonal line and follows the direction of the diagonal line, then the regression model meets the normality assumption.
2) If the data is scattered or far apart and does not follow the direction of the diagonal line, then the regression model does not meet the normality assumption.

3.5   Homogeneity Test

The purpose of the homogeneity test is to determine whether several population variances are the same or not. This homogeneity test is used as a requirement in independent sample test analysis using the Compare Means One Way ANOVA method. The underlying assumption in variance analysis (ANOVA) is that the variances of the populations are the same. The test criterion is that if the value is greater than 0.05 or 5%, then it can be said that the variances of the two data groups are the same. The results of the homogeneity test are seen from the test of homogeneity variance output, where the significance value of the storytelling approach and children's concentration is 0.875, which means that 0.875 is greater than 0.05, so it can be said that the two data sets are homogeneous. For more details, see the following test of homogeneity of variances table:

Table 3.4 Homogeneity Test Results

Effect of Storytelling Approach (X) on Concentration (Y)			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.025	1	58	.875

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS19

3.6   Hypothesis Testing and Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The purpose of data analysis testing is to answer research questions posed through hypotheses. These hypotheses are tested as tentative answers to the question, "Is there

an effect of the storytelling approach on the concentration of Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB) children?" Hypothesis testing in this study uses simple linear regression formulation, and data is obtained through SPSS 19. Testing with simple linear regression provides the following results:

Table 3.5 Regression Equation *Output*

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1　(Constant)	7.067	4.003		1,765	.088
Storytelling Approach	.959	.030	.986	31,651	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Child Concentration					

Source: Data management, 2025 using SPSS 19

Based on the output results by reading the coefficients, a constant value of 7.067 was obtained, which means that if the storytelling approach has a value of 0, the consistent value of the child concentration variable is 7.067. The regression coefficient for the storytelling approach variable (X) is 0.959, meaning that if the storytelling approach increases or develops, the child concentration variable (Y) will increase by 0.959 as follows: Y = 7.067 + 0.959X.

The statistical hypothesis in this study is:

H_a: There is a positive and significant effect of the storytelling approach on the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB).

H_o: There is no positive and significant effect of the storytelling approach on the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB).

The hypothesis testing criterion is to reject Ho if t_{count} > significance < 0.05 or 5%. Based on data analysis, a t_{count} value of 31.651 and a $t_{(table)\ value}$ with df=n-2 is df=28, which is 2.048 with a significance value of 0.000 because the absolute value of t_{count} 31.651> 2.048 and the significance is 0.000 < 0.05, so H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. It can be concluded that there is an effect of the storytelling approach on the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB). The hypothesis testing criteria use alpha 5% (0.05), namely $H_{(o)}$is rejected if ≤ 0.05 by reading the following ANOVA table.

Table 3.6 ANOVA Analysis Output

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	ANOVA[b]					
	Regression	8546.106	1	8546.106	1001.800	.000[a]
1	Residual	238,861	28	8,531		
	Total	8,784,967	29			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Storytelling Approach

b. Dependent Variable: Children's Concentration

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS 19

From the ANOVA analysis output, the $F_{calculated}$ value is 1001.800 with a significance of 0.000, so there is no need to match the F table because SPSS 19 already provides the significance value. A significance of $0.000 < 0.05$ indicates that $H_{(o)}$ is rejected and Ha is accepted. This shows that the storytelling approach has an effect on the concentration of SMB Mahakusala children.

Table 3.7 Residual Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
	Residual Statistics[a]				
Predicted Value	105.8198	173.8923	132.6333	17.16663	30
Residual Standard	-8.16008	7.30391	.000	2.86995	30
Predicted Value	-1.562	2.403	.000	1.000	30
Standard Residual	-2,794	2,501	.000	.983	30

a. Dependent Variable: Child Concentration

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS 19

The minimum residual of the storytelling approach to the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB) was obtained at -8.16008, the maximum value at 7.30391, the mean value at 0.000, and the standard deviation at 2.86995 with a total of 30 respondents.

Table 3.8 Determination coefficient value R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
	Model Summary[b]			
1	.986[a]	.973	.972	2.92074

a. Predictors: (Constant), Storytelling Approach

b. Dependent Variable: Children's Concentration

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS 19

The coefficient of determination in Table 3.8 above is R Square, which has a value of 0.973, meaning that 97.3% of the storytelling approach can have a significant effect on children's concentration in understanding the material presented by the teacher (presenter) in the classroom, while the remaining 2.7% is influenced by other variables. Other variables outside the storytelling approach that were not examined in this study are parental support, children's internal motivation, and the learning environment. The results of the quantitative analysis, the normality test, obtained a residual significance value of 0.871. Because the significance for the residual value is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data population is normally distributed. From the results of the homogeneity test, a significant result of 0.875 was obtained. Because the significance is ≥ 0.05, it can be concluded that the data on the storytelling approach to children's concentration has the same variance.

3.7   *Description of indicators in variable (X) Storytelling Approach*

The Storytelling Approach variable in the field research at SMB Mahakusala in 2025 can be measured using a questionnaire containing 36 valid and reliable statements based on the results of validity and reliability analysis. The calculations in this study were analysed using SPSS 19 to obtain a description of the research data obtained through a questionnaire related to the storytelling approach.

Table 3.9 Descriptive Statistics of the Storytelling Approach Variable

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Standard Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Standard Error	Statistics	Statistics
Storytelling	30	71.00	103.00	174.00	130.97	3.27	17.90	320.58
Valid N (listwise)	30							

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS 19

Based on data processing using SPSS 19, it is known that the storytelling approach (X) from the questionnaire completed by 30 respondents obtained the lowest (minimum) value of 103, while the highest (maximum) value reached 174, with a range of 71. This indicates that there are significant variations in the level of application of the storytelling approach among respondents.

The mean value of the storytelling approach variable was 130.97, indicating that, in general, the application of storytelling was in the fairly high category. The standard deviation value of 17.90 showed that the level of data dispersion was moderate, meaning that there were differences but not too extreme between respondents. The variance value of 320.58 shows the amount of data variation from the mean value.

Meanwhile, the standard error mean of 3.27 describes the level of accuracy of the mean value in representing the population as a whole. The smaller the value, the more accurate the mean.

3.8 *Description of indicators in the variable (Y) Child Concentration*

The variable of children's concentration in the field research at SMB Mahakusala in 2025 can be measured using a questionnaire containing 36 valid and reliable statements through validity and reliability tests. The calculations in this study were analysed using SPSS 19 to obtain a description of the research data obtained through the questionnaire related to child concentration. The data description shows the maximum and minimum scores obtained from the questionnaire analysis.

Table 3.10 Descriptive Statistics of Children's Concentration Variables

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Standard Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Standard Error	Statistic	Statistic
Concentration	30	77.00	117.00	194.00	153.43	3.76	20.60	424.46
Valid N (listwise)	30							

Source: Data processing, 2025 using SPSS19

Based on data processing using SPSS 19, it is known that the concentration of children (Y) from the questionnaire completed by 30 respondents obtained the lowest (minimum) value in this variable of 117, while the highest (maximum) value was 194, with a range of 77. The mean value of the children's concentration was 153.43, indicating that, in general, the children's concentration levels were in the fairly high category.

The standard deviation value is 20.60, indicating moderate variation in the data, which means that the concentration levels among children are not too uniform, but also not too extreme. Meanwhile, the variance value of 424.46 shows the spread of children's concentration values relative to the mean. In addition, the standard error mean value of 3.76 indicates the level of accuracy of the mean in representing the population. The smaller the standard error, the more accurate the mean is as a representation of the population.

3.9 *Recapitulation of Variable (X) Storytelling Approach*

Based on the results of the data analysis per indicator, the recapitulation of variable (X) of the storytelling approach is as follows:

Table 3.11 Summary of Storytelling Approach Indicators

No.	Indicator	Number (F.X)	Average	Percentage	Criteria
1	Interest & Engagement in Storytelling	126	4.2	84	Very High
2	Understanding Buddhist Teachings Through Storytelling	114	3.8	76	High
3	The Influence of Storytelling on Attitudes and Behaviour	124	4.1	82	Very High
4	The Effectiveness of Storytelling in Enhancing Spiritual Values	128	4.2	85	Very High
	Average Number	123	4.08	82	Very High

Source: Research data analysis in 2025 using Microsoft Excel

Based on Table the recapitulation of data provides an overview of the storytelling approach variable with four indicators, namely: 1) the indicator of interest and attraction to storytelling with a percentage of 84%; 2) the indicator of understanding of Buddhist teachings through storytelling with a percentage of 76%; 3) indicator of the influence of storytelling on attitudes and behaviour with a percentage of 82%; 4) indicator of the effectiveness of storytelling in increasing spiritual values with a percentage of 85%. Table 4.9 shows that the average value of the storytelling approach variable is 4.08, with 82% in the very high category. The highest score was found in the indicator of interest and attraction to storytelling, with a percentage of 84% in the very high category, and the lowest score was found in the indicator of understanding of Buddhist teachings through storytelling, with a percentage of 76% in the high category. This condition illustrates that students at SMB Mahakusala are already able to understand the storytelling approach well during the learning process.

3.10   *Recapitulation of Child Concentration Indicators*

Based on the results of the data analysis per indicator, the recapitulation of the variable (Y) Children's Concentration is as follows:

Table 3.12 Summary of Child Concentration Indicators

No	Indicator	Number (F.X)	Average	Percentage	Criteria
1	Ability to Focus While Studying	126	4.2	84	Very High
2	Memory and Information Processing	119	4.2	85	Very High
3	Environmental Influence on Concentration	121	4.0	80	Height
4	Habits and Strategies to Improve Concentration	115	4.1	82	Very High
	Average number	120	4.1	83	Very High

Source: Research data processed in 2025 using Microsoft Excel

Based on Table, the data recapitulation results provide an overview of the variables of children's concentration with four indicators, namely: 1) the indicator of focus ability while studying with a percentage of 84%; 2) the indicator of memory and information processing with a percentage of 85%; 3) the indicator of environmental influence on concentration with a percentage of 80%; 4) the indicator of habits and strategies to improve concentration with a percentage of 82%. Table 4.15 shows that the average value of the child concentration variable is 4.1 with a percentage of 83% in the very high category. The highest value was found in the memory and information processing indicator with a percentage of 85% in the very high category, and the lowest value was found in the environmental influence on concentration indicator with a percentage of 80% in the high category. This condition illustrates that students at SMB Mahakusala have good concentration during the learning process.

3.11   *The Effect of the Storytelling Approach on Children's Concentration*

The storytelling approach is not a new approach in moral and religious education. In the context of Buddhist education, stories have been the main means of conveying Dhamma values since the time of the Buddha. The stories in the Jataka, Dhammapada Atthakatha, and Vinaya contain many moral experiences that are conveyed in an interesting and easy-to-understand manner, especially for children. At Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School, the storytelling approach is used as the main learning method to convey teachings such as love, wisdom, patience, and compassion. This approach is applied systematically in weekly sessions, where teachers begin the lesson by telling moral stories, either from Buddhist tales or contemporary stories that are in line with the values of Dhamma teachings.

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing, there is a positive and significant influence between the storytelling approach and the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB). This means that the storytelling approach is very important for children because it can improve their concentration in understanding Buddhist teachings, develop their imagination and creativity in creative thinking, improve their ability to speak and listen, develop their empathy and ability to manage their emotions through the stories told, develop their ability to read and write stories about story structure, vocabulary, and grammar through storytelling, and improve children's memory in remembering the details of the stories told by the teacher.

The results of this study are in line with the opinion (Saputra, 2021) which states that learning by applying the storytelling approach can increase children's concentration in paying close attention and being able to remember the details of the story told by the teacher, being able to observe and understand the lesson carefully, being able to ask questions to the teacher during the lesson, improve efficiency and connection with the teacher, and also motivate children to understand the Buddhist teachings conveyed by the teacher, thereby improving children's ability to , concentrate or focus through storytelling. The storytelling approach has a significant impact on the success of

children in improving their ability to concentrate at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB).

The storytelling approach began to be implemented by inserting Buddhist stories, such as jataka stories, stories about the life of the Buddha, and moral stories relevant to Dhamma values that could be beneficial to children. Teachers used hand puppets, illustrative pictures, and interactive modules to support the delivery of stories. The stories were told with varied intonation, facial expressions, and language styles appropriate for the children's age. After this method was implemented, the children's responses changed significantly. The children appeared more enthusiastic, curious, and more active in listening and answering questions after the storytelling session was over.

The storytelling approach proved to be more effective in bridging Buddhist teachings in a fun and memorable way. Psychologically, children find it easier to focus when the material is presented in the form of a story because it engages their imagination and personal associations. The implication for Dhamma education at SMB Mahakusala is that the storytelling approach can be used as a key strategy in teaching to improve children's concentration, which has a direct impact on a deeper understanding of Dhamma values and can improve information processing and attention retention.

Observational data shows that 97.3% of 30 children experienced an increase in concentration duration during learning activities. Before the storytelling approach was implemented, children were able to maintain focus for an average of 10-15 minutes. After several weeks of consistent learning using the storytelling method, children's concentration duration increased to an average of 25-30 minutes. In addition, indicators such as the ability to remember the content of the story, active involvement in discussions, and the accuracy of children's answers to questions after the story also improved. Interviews with teachers showed that storytelling can help children connect moral teachings with everyday situations, so that Dhamma values can become more relevant and easier to understand. This strengthens the hypothesis that storytelling can not only improve concentration but also deepen children's understanding of the material presented by teachers.

Several previous studies have shown that the storytelling approach is very effective in improving children's concentration and comprehension in learning, namely:
a. The storytelling approach is a very important educational reinforcement method in shaping the character of students [26].
b. The effectiveness of the storytelling method in shaping the character of primary school students shows that storytelling can be an effective tool in instilling positive values [22].
c. Interactive and enjoyable storytelling methods can be an effective means of instilling noble character in children through character education in the environment of the Al-Ikhlas Mosque TPQ [23].
d. The use of short stories in learning as a medium for instilling character values in students shows that literature can be an effective tool in character education [24].

The results of several previous studies on the storytelling approach method have shown that it has an effect on improving children's concentration and comprehension in

learning. Children can become more focused, able to maintain attention longer, and more easily remember the material presented. The storytelling approach needs to be applied because it can build a personal connection between children and the teaching material, increase active participation in discussions after listening to stories, stimulate imagination, and help instil moral values and character in children. The storytelling approach has an influence on understanding abstract concepts when linked to stories that touch their feelings and can help children's brains process information sequentially (logically).

In Buddhist teachings, the use of stories has been used by the Buddha himself as a means of teaching and expounding the Dhamma to monks. Several suttas mention how the storytelling approach is used to illustrate the Dhamma in an easy-to-understand way, namely:

a. Bhikkhunupassaya Sutta [25], This sutta emphasises the importance of mindfulness (concentration) in meditation practice. In the context of storytelling, listening to and telling stories can train children's concentration to be fully present in the moment.

b. Kesamutti Sutta [26], in this Sutta, the Buddha encourages the Kalamas not to accept teachings simply because of tradition or authority, but to understand the teachings directly through personal experience. In the context of storytelling, this approach allows children to appreciate and understand stories in a non-dogmatic way.

3.12   The Significant Influence of the Storytelling Approach on Children's Concentration

Based on the results of research conducted at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB), the storytelling approach has been proven to have a significant influence on improving children's concentration during the Dhamma learning process. This influence can be seen both quantitatively through an increase in the duration and quality of children's attention and qualitatively through changes in children's learning behaviour. One of the main indicators in measuring the magnitude of the influence of the storytelling approach is the length of time children are able to maintain their focus or attention during learning activities. Before the storytelling approach was implemented, children were able to maintain their focus for an average of 10-15 minutes. After several weeks of consistent learning using the storytelling method, the duration of children's concentration increased to an average of 25-30 minutes.

This shows an increase in concentration duration of 97.3%. This increase is very significant considering that school-age children usually have a short attention span. The storytelling approach is able to attract children's interest from the start, maintain their attention through a captivating storyline, and provide a more in-depth learning experience. From the analysis of the questionnaire and observation results, it was found that: 25 out of 30 children (97.3%) showed a significant increase in concentration, while 5 children (2.7%) experienced a moderate increase in concentration. This data can be concluded that the effectiveness of the storytelling approach in improving children's concentration is in the very high category with a success rate of 97.3%. This approach has been proven to have a significant positive effect on attracting children's attention,

stimulating their interest in learning, and helping them to focus more on receiving Dhamma lessons. Stories that are told in an interesting way and are relevant to children's lives make it easier for them to understand and remember the content of the lesson. Thus, the use of storytelling as a learning method can be an effective alternative in improving the quality of children's concentration when participating in teaching and learning activities at SMB Mahakusala.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study on the Effect of the Storytelling Approach on the Concentration of Children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB), it can be concluded that: There is a significant positive effect between the Storytelling Approach and the Concentration of Children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB). The magnitude of the influence of the storytelling approach on the concentration of children at Mahakusala Buddhist Sunday School (SMB) can be seen from the R Square value of 97.3%, which indicates that the storytelling approach influences children's concentration, while 2.7% is influenced by other factors that were not studied. This storytelling approach has been proven to attract children's attention, stimulate their interest in learning, and help them focus more on receiving Dhamma lessons. Stories that are told in an interesting way and are relevant to the children's lives make it easier for them to understand and remember the content of the lesson. Thus, the use of storytelling as a learning method can be an effective alternative in improving the quality of children's concentration when participating in teaching and learning activities at Mahakusala SMB.

References

[1] K. Sutawan, B. Burmansah, S. Susanto, W. Widiyanto, and R. Rapiadi, "The Effect of Lecturer Performance and Organizational Culture on Students' Learning Motivation in Higher Education Institutions," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan*, vol. 17, no. 6, 2023, doi: 10.35931/aq.v17i6.2845.

[2] A. M. I. T. Asfar and A. M. I. A. Asfar, "Landasan Pendidikan: Hakikat Dan Tujuan Pendidikan (Implications Of Philosophical Views Of People In Education)," *Method*, vol. 1, Jan. 2020.

[3] H. Aryanto, M. D. Azizah, V. A. Nuraini, and L. Sagita, "Inovasi Tujuan Pendidikan di Indonesia," *JIRA: Jurnal Inovasi dan Riset Akademik*, vol. 2, no. 10, 2021, doi: 10.47387/jira.v2i10.231.

[4] E. A. L. W. A. C. Fauzia and D. Marcelya, "Peningkatan konsentrasi peserta didik sekolah dasar melalui program bimbingan belajar," vol. 1, pp. 367–376, 2023.

[5] P. Priono, B. Burmansah, W. Seneru, and A. Info, "Mindfulness Practice Gives Impact On Student Academic Procrastination - Case Study At Buddhist Higher Education Institution," *Jurnal Scientia*, vol. 12, no. 03, 2023.

[6] E. S. R. S. P. Setiyawan, "Pengaruh Pelaksanaan Meditasi Sebelum Pembelajaran Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Menangani Stres Akademik Siswa Agama

Buddha," *Journal on Education*, 2023.

[7] Boddhi and Nanamoli, *DIGHA NIKAYA, Khotbah-khotbah Panjang Sang Buddha*, vol. 15, no. 2. 2019.

[8] M. Roslin, I. Astuti, and D. Yuniarni, "Peningkatan Konsentrasi Melalui Metode Bercerita Pada Anak Usia 4-5 Tahun," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Untan*, 2014.

[9] G. Blandin, F. Ferrari, G. Lesage, P. Le-Clech, M. Héran, and X. Martinez-Lladó, "Forward osmosis as concentration process: Review of opportunities and challenges," 2020, doi: 10.3390/membranes10100284.

[10] N and Bodhi, *Majjhima Nikāya*. Jakarta Barat: DhammaCitta Press, 2017. doi: 10.1007/978-94-024-0852-2_267.

[11] K. N. Safitri, "Pembelajaran Penjasorkes Di Sekolah Dasar: Manfaat Olahraga Untuk Kesehatan Tubuh," *Sinar Dunia: Jurnal Riset Sosial Humaniora dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 44–56, 2024, doi: 10.58192/sidu.v3i2.2108.

[12] M.I.18, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Boston.

[13] A. Fatchuroji, S. Yunus, M. Jamal, G. Somelok, R. Yulianti, and M. Sihombing, "Pengaruh Tingkat Konsentrasi Terhadap Hasil Belajar," *Journal on Education*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 13758–13765, 2023.

[14] M. Walse, *Digha Nikāya Khotbah-khotbah Panjang Sang Buddha*. Jakarta Barat: DhammaCitta Press, 2009.

[15] R. Rapiadi, S. A. Gautama, B. Burmansah, K. Sutawan, and S. Susanto, "The Influence of Mindfulness on Student Learning Interests at Higher Education Institutions," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan*, vol. 17, no. 6, 2023, doi: 10.35931/aq.v17i6.2846.

[16] P. O. Hutasoit and B. D. Nababan, "Peningkatan Konsentrasi Siswa Dalam Mengikuti Seminar Dengan Metode Demonstrasi," *Perigel: Jurnal Penyuluhan Masyarakat Indonesia*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 26–36, 2022, doi: 10.56444/perigel.v1i4.228.

[17] M. D. H. Rahiem, "Storytelling in early childhood education: Time to go digital," *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2021, doi: 10.1186/s40723-021-00081-x.

[18] D. A. Haerudin and N. Cahyati, "Penerapan Metode Storytelling Berbasis Cerita Rakyat dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Karakter Anak," *Jurnal Pelita PAUD*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2018.

[19] C. Ortiz, "Storytelling otherwise: Decolonising storytelling in planning," *Planning Theory*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2023, doi: 10.1177/14730952221115875.

[20] M. P. Moss, "Storytelling," in *Complementary Therapies in Nursing: Promoting Integrative Care*, 2022. doi: 10.1891/9780826194992.0013.

[21] D. Yusuf and M. Suryandari, "Keterkaitan Story Telling Dengan Public Speaking Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Komunikasi Bagi Mahasiswa KPI," *Jurihum: Jurnal Inovasi dan Humaniora*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 640–644, 2023.

[22] B. D. Wulan, "Pembentukan Karakter Siswa Sekolah Dasar Dengan Storytelling," *Journal of Arts and Education*, vol. 1, pp. 16–25, 2022.

[23] Aryanto, "Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Metode Bercerita Sebagai Upaya Membentuk Akhlak Mulia Pada Anak TPQ Masjid Al-Ikhlas Munyung, Kwarsan, Grogol, Sukoharjo," *Adabiyah Islamic Journal*, vol. 2, pp. 29–46, 2024.

[24] Ningsih, "Pemanfaatan Cerita Pendek Sebagai Media Pendidikan Karakter Siswa," *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan)*, vol. 5, 2021.

[25] Bodhi, *Samyutta Nikaya Jilid 3 Tentang Kelompok-kelompok Unsur Kehidupan (Khandhavagga)*, vol. 3. Jakarta Barat: DhammaCitta Press, 2010.

[26] Bodhi, *Anguttara Nikaya - Khotbah-Khotbah Numerika Sang Buddha*, vol. 42. Jakarta Barat: DhammaCitta Press, 2015.