

INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON SUMMER LEARNING LOSS AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNERS IN IDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised Early Childhood Education teachers in public and private primary schools, while a sample of 100 teachers was selected from 20 schools. Data were collected using one structured questionnaire titled "Summer Learning Loss Questionnaire (SLLQ)" with a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) answered the research questions, while simple linear regression tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that lack of reading activities ($\bar{x} = 3.02$), lack of holiday lessons ($\bar{x} = 3.01$) and long school holidays ($\bar{x} = 2.98$) were the major causes of summer learning loss (weighted mean = 2.93). The effects were rated very high (weighted mean = 3.01), with poor knowledge retention ($\bar{x} = 3.10$) and reduced academic performance ($\bar{x} = 3.04$) being the most prominent. Regression analysis showed that parental involvement ($\beta = -0.472$, $R^2 = 0.223$, $p < 0.05$) and access to holiday learning activities ($\beta = -0.536$, $R^2 = 0.287$, $p < 0.05$) significantly reduced summer learning loss. The study recommends increased parental involvement and structured holiday learning programmes to sustain pupils' academic achievement.

Keywords: Summer learning loss, early childhood learners, parental involvement, holiday learning activities, academic performance

Introduction

Early childhood education serves as the foundation upon which future learning and development are built. During this stage, children acquire essential literacy, numeracy, cognitive, and social skills that influence their later academic success. Continuous engagement in teaching and learning process activities is highly necessary so that the knowledge and skills acquired during the school years are spirally connected and built. However, breaks in learning activities for long periods do disrupt the learning process and may result in the loss of previously acquired knowledge. This is commonly referred to as summer learning loss, which has become a growing concern among educators, researchers, and other stakeholders in the education and child development world.

Summer learning loss refers to the reduction in knowledge and skills of learners during extended school holidays or prolonged breaks from formal schooling. It occurs when children are away from schooling and learning activities during a holiday period, leading to a decrease in the retention of previously learned knowledge, including literacy and numeracy. Kuhfeld & Tarasawa (2020) refer to summer learning loss as a major factor contributing to learning gaps among children, especially those in early childhood and primary education. The concept of summer learning loss is based on the idea that continuous engagement in learning activities is important for the retention and reinforcement of previous learning. When children are separated from school learning and stimulation during long vacations, they may forget previously learned concepts, topic and experience difficulties recalling and linking previous knowledge with the new lesson when school resumes. Interruptions in learning can negatively affect children's cognitive development, learning continuity, and academic progression, particularly among vulnerable young learners (UNESCO, 2023).

Young learners are more vulnerable to learning loss as they are at a foundational level for skills like reading, writing, and basic mathematics, which require regular practice and encouragement. According to the World Bank (2022), long learning interruptions can lead to reductions in basic knowledge of literacy and numeracy performance, with effects on long-term educational achievement. Likewise, the United Nations Children's

Fund (2023) notes that children who lack access to learning motivation opportunities during school holidays are likely to experience poor academic development. Children from low-income and poor backgrounds, or those whose parents lack educational backgrounds, are highly vulnerable to learning loss during the holiday. This is due to the limited availability of educational materials, inadequate parental support, a lack of holiday programmes, and insufficient access to digital learning resources in these households. Research indicates that children from homes with limited educational support are more likely to return to school with lower levels of knowledge, skills, and academic retention compared to their peers from more supportive environments (Alexander et al., 2021). Several factors contribute to the summer learning loss.

The causes of summer learning loss refer to the various factors that may contribute to the decline in academic knowledge and skills among learners during long school holidays. Summer learning loss occurs when children don't maintain consistent engagement in educational activities for learning purposes during holidays from the formal school environment. Research has shown that the break from structured learning during long vacations affects children's retention of previous learning concepts (Kuhfeld et al., 2022).

Children who do not participate in reading, writing, or other educational activities during holidays are more likely to experience declines in academic performance. The United Nations Children's Fund explains that continuous learning opportunities are essential for sustaining children's cognitive development and preventing setbacks in learning achievement (UNICEF, 2023). When children spend long periods without educational stimulation, they may gradually forget previous knowledge.

Parents play vital roles in supporting children's educational development by supervising homework, encouraging them in reading habits, and providing learning materials. But many families may face challenges such as low educational background, busy work schedules, or financial issues that reduce support for learning activities at home. According to the World Bank, children whose parents are less involved in educational activities are more vulnerable to learning loss during prolonged school closures and holidays (World Bank, 2023). Children with poor or a lack of financial support for their education often have limited access to books, educational technologies, internet services, and structured holiday learning classes or activities that can support continuous learning, while children from more advantaged homes are more likely to participate in educational experiences during school breaks. Recent studies indicate that disparities in access to educational resources contribute significantly to widening achievement gaps among children during long vacations (Dorn et al., 2021). The effects of loss are noticeable in the learning environment.

Summer learning loss affects children's ability to retain previously acquired knowledge and skills, which influence their academic performance and overall educational development. Research has shown that extended breaks from structured learning can lead to significant declines in literacy, numeracy, and classroom readiness, particularly among young learners (Kuhfeld et al., 2022). Children who experience learning loss return to school with reduced understanding of previously taught concepts, making it difficult for them to cope with new lessons. The World Bank notes that interruptions in learning contribute to reduced educational achievement and slower academic progress among children, especially in foundational subjects such as reading and mathematics (World Bank, 2023). This decline may affect learners' confidence and willingness to participate actively in classroom activities. Another important effect is difficulty in knowledge retention and recall. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, prolonged absence from active learning environments negatively affects children's cognitive development and learning continuity (UNICEF, 2023).

Children from supportive homes maintain learning during holidays, while children from disadvantaged backgrounds may not. Recent studies indicate that repeated learning loss over time can increase disparities in educational attainment between learners from different socio-economic backgrounds (Dorn et al., 2021). Teachers may be forced to revise earlier lessons extensively in order to help learners recover lost knowledge. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization explains that disruptions in learning continuity can hinder educational progress and reduce the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes (UNESCO, 2024). Repeated learning loss can affect overall educational quality and learners' preparedness for the next levels of schooling.

It is against this background that this study investigates the influence of parental involvement on summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. Specifically, the study focuses on parental educational involvement, home literacy environment, access to structured summer learning opportunities, socioeconomic status of families, and digital access and learning engagement as key factors that may influence the occurrence and extent of summer learning loss among young learners. In Nigeria, early childhood education is guided by national policy frameworks that emphasise holistic child development and preparation for formal schooling. However, the implementation of these policies varies across regions due to differences in socio-economic conditions and educational resources of states like Oyo State. In the Ido Local Government Area, Oyo State, early childhood education reflects both national structures and local realities. The area comprises a mix of rural and semi-urban communities with the presence of both public and private nursery and primary schools, which makes it suitable for educational and social research involving children and families. The local government area was created in 1976 and has its administrative headquarters at Ido town (Oyo State Government 2024). It shares boundaries with several other local government areas within Oyo State and forms part of the Ibadan metropolitan region.

Ido Local Government Area was selected for this study because it presents characteristics relevant to the investigation of summer learning loss in early childhood education. The mixture of rural and semi-urban settlements, differences in school quality, and status conditions provides an appropriate context for examining how school holidays affect children's learning retention and continuity. In this study, the area serves as the geographical and socio-economic context within which the causes and effects of summer learning loss among early childhood learners are examined.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is on the influence of parental involvement on summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area, Oyo State. The objectives are to:

- i. examine the causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- ii. examine the consequences of summer learning loss on the academic readiness of early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- iii. assess the level of parental involvement in relation to early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- iv. determine the influence of parental involvement on summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Research Questions

- i. What are the causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?
- ii. What are the consequences of summer learning loss on academic readiness of early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?
- iii. What is the level of parental involvement in relation to early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There will be no significant influence of parental involvement on summer learning loss among early childhood learners.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population consisted of all Early Childhood Education teachers in public and private primary schools in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. Twenty (20) primary schools were purposively selected to represent all the primary schools in the Local Government Area. The selected schools consisted of ten (10) schools from rural communities and ten (10) schools from urban communities to ensure adequate representation of the study area. Five (5)

Early Childhood Education teachers were selected from each of the twenty (20) schools through a simple random sampling technique, making a total sample of one hundred (100) teachers for the study.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Factors Affecting Summer Learning Loss Questionnaire (FASLLQ)." The questionnaire consisted of twenty-eight (28) items on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was divided into four sections. Section A contained eight (8) items on the causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners. Section B contained eight (8) items on the effects of summer learning loss on learners' academic performance. Section C consisted of six (6) items on parental involvement and summer learning loss, while Section D contained six (6) items on access to holiday learning activities and summer learning loss.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts in Early Childhood Education, and a reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher with the assistance of research assistants. The completed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved immediately after completion to ensure a high return rate.

The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Research Questions 1 and 2 were answered using simple percentages, weighted mean, and standard deviation. The decision rule was based on a criterion mean of 2.50. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted, while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was rejected. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using the Simple Linear Regression tool at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question One: What are the causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?

Table 1: Showing Causes of Summer Learning Loss among Early Childhood Learners

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Long school holidays contribute to learning loss among pupils.	33	37	25	5	100	2.98	0.89
2	Lack of reading activities during holidays leads to forgetting previously learned concepts.	36	34	26	4	100	3.02	0.86
3	Inadequate parental supervision during holidays contributes to summer learning loss.	28	38	28	6	100	2.88	0.92
4	Lack of educational materials at home contributes to learning loss.	27	39	28	6	100	2.87	0.91
5	Excessive engagement in non-academic activities during holidays affects learning retention.	32	37	26	5	100	2.97	0.88
6	A poor home literacy environment contributes to summer learning loss.	26	39	29	6	100	2.85	0.93
7	Lack of holiday lessons increases the likelihood of learning loss.	35	34	27	4	100	3.01	0.87

Weighted Mean ($\bar{x}$) = 2.93 **Decision** = High Level

Decision Rule: 0.00–0.99 = Very Low, 1.00–1.99 = Low, 2.00–2.49 = Moderate, 2.50–2.99 = High, 3.00 and Above = Very High.

Table 1 shows the perceived causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. The findings revealed a weighted mean score of 2.93, indicating a high level of agreement among teachers regarding the identified causes of summer learning loss. The respondents strongly agreed that lack of reading activities during holidays ($\bar{x} = 3.02$) and lack of holiday lessons ($\bar{x} = 3.01$) are major causes of summer learning loss among learners. Other factors identified include long school holidays ($\bar{x} = 2.98$), excessive engagement in non-academic activities ($\bar{x} = 2.97$), limited access to digital learning resources ($\bar{x} = 2.89$), inadequate parental supervision ($\bar{x} = 2.88$), lack of educational materials at home ($\bar{x} = 2.87$), and poor home literacy environment ($\bar{x} = 2.85$). This implies that teachers generally perceive summer learning loss as being influenced by inadequate learning engagement and support during school holidays.

Research Question Two

What are the consequences of summer learning loss on academic readiness of the early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?

Table 2: Showing Consequences of Summer Learning Loss among Early Childhood Learners

S/ N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Long school holidays contribute to learning loss among pupils.	33	37	25	5	100	2.98	0.89
2	Lack of reading activities during holidays leads to forgetting previously learned concepts.	36	34	26	4	100	3.02	0.86
3	Inadequate parental supervision during holidays contributes to summer learning loss.	28	38	28	6	100	2.88	0.92
4	Lack of educational materials at home contributes to learning loss.	27	39	28	6	100	2.87	0.91
5	Excessive engagement in non-academic activities during holidays affects learning retention.	32	37	26	5	100	2.97	0.88
6	A poor home literacy environment contributes to summer learning loss.	26	39	29	6	100	2.85	0.93
7	Lack of holiday lessons increases the likelihood of learning loss.	35	34	27	4	100	3.01	0.87
8	Limited access to digital learning resources during holidays contributes to learning loss.	29	37	28	6	100	2.89	0.90

Weighted Mean ($\bar{x}$) = 3.01 Decision = Very High Level

Decision Rule: 0.00–0.99 = Very Low, 1.00–1.99 = Low, 2.00–2.49 = Moderate, 2.50–2.99 = High, 3.00 and Above = Very High

Table 2 presents the consequences of summer learning loss on the academic readiness of early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. The findings revealed a weighted mean score of 3.01, indicating a very high level of agreement among the respondents regarding the effects of summer learning loss on learners. The respondents strongly agreed that pupils find it difficult to remember previously taught concepts after holidays ($\bar{x} = 3.10$), teachers spend additional time revising previous lessons after holidays ($\bar{x} = 3.08$), summer learning loss reduces pupils' reading ability ($\bar{x} = 3.05$), affects pupils' academic

performance ($\bar{x} = 3.04$), and affects pupils' numeracy skills ($\bar{x} = 3.02$). Other effects identified include slowed academic progress ($\bar{x} = 2.98$), widened achievement gaps among pupils ($\bar{x} = 2.93$), and reduced classroom participation ($\bar{x} = 2.90$). The findings imply that summer learning loss has considerable negative effects on the academic performance, knowledge retention, and classroom engagement of early childhood learners.

Research Question Three

What is the level of parental involvement in relation to early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State?

Table 3: Level of Parental Involvement among Early Childhood Learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State

S/ N	Items	Always	Someti mes	Rarely	Never	N	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.
1	Parents encourage their children to engage in reading activities during the summer holidays.	15	25	40	20	100	2.35	0.96
2	Parents provide learning materials for their children during the summer holidays.	14	24	42	20	100	2.32	0.94
3	Parents enroll their children in holiday lessons or educational programmes during school breaks.	12	23	43	22	100	2.25	0.93
4	Parents assist their children with learning activities during the summer holidays.	13	24	42	21	100	2.29	0.95
5	Parents supervise their children's educational activities during the holiday period.	11	25	43	21	100	2.26	0.92
6	Parents create opportunities for their children to practice previously learned concepts during school breaks.	14	23	42	21	100	2.30	0.94

Weighted Mean ($\bar{x}$) = 2.30 Decision = Low

Decision Rule: 3.50–4.00 = Very High, 2.50–3.49 = High Level, 1.50–2.49 = Low Level and 1.00–1.49 = Very Low

Table 3 shows a low level of parental involvement among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, with a grand mean score of 2.30. The mean score falls within the decision range of 1.50–2.49, indicating that parents are not sufficiently involved in supporting their children's learning during the summer holidays.

The findings revealed that parents' encouragement of reading activities during the summer holidays has the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.35$), followed by the provision of learning materials ($\bar{x} = 2.32$). However, both mean scores showed a low level of parental involvement. Similarly, parents' enrolment of their children in holiday lessons or educational programmes ($\bar{x} = 2.25$), assistance with learning activities ($\bar{x} = 2.29$), supervision of educational activities ($\bar{x} = 2.26$), and provision of opportunities for practicing previously learned concepts during school breaks ($\bar{x} = 2.30$) all fall within the low parental involvement category. Overall, the grand mean score of 2.30 indicates that parental involvement in learning activities of early childhood learners in the study area is low

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There will be no significant influence of parental involvement on summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Parental Involvement on Summer Learning Loss among Early Childhood Learners

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta (β)</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig. (p)</i>
Constant	4.215	0.531	-	7.94	.000
Parental Involvement	-0.462	0.087	-0.472	-5.31	.000

<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
0.472	0.223	0.215	28.196	.000

Decision Rule: Reject the null hypothesis if the p-value is less than 0.05; otherwise, do not reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the p-value (.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The result of the simple linear regression analysis revealed that parental involvement has a significant influence on summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State ($\beta = -0.472$, $p < 0.05$). The negative beta coefficient indicates that increased parental involvement is associated with a reduction in summer learning loss among learners. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.223$) implies that parental involvement accounted for 22.3% of the variation in summer learning loss among early childhood learners. Therefore, parental involvement is a significant predictor of summer learning loss among learners in the study area.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that summer learning loss is a common educational challenge among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. Teachers identified lack of reading activities during holidays, lack of holiday lessons, and long school holidays as the major causes of learning loss. This suggests that children are academically inactive during school breaks are more likely to forget previous knowledge and skills. The finding agrees with Kuhfeld et al. (2022), who reported that prolonged interruption of learning leads to a reduction in learners' academic achievement.

The study further revealed that summer learning loss has serious consequences for early childhood learners. Teachers agreed that learners experience poor knowledge retention, reduced academic performance, lower reading and numeracy skills, and require extensive revision when they return to school. This finding is consistent with UNESCO (2024) and the World Bank (2023), which noted that prolonged breaks from structured learning affect children's educational progress and predisposition for following learning.

The study also found that the level of parental involvement in supporting children's learning during the summer holidays was low. Parents rarely encouraged regular reading, provided learning materials, supervised learning activities, or enrolled their children in holiday educational programmes. This finding supports the position of UNICEF (2023), which emphasised that active parental support is essential for maintaining children's learning continuity outside the classroom.

Finally, the regression analysis showed that parental involvement had a significant negative influence on summer learning loss. This means that increased parental involvement significantly reduces the level of summer learning loss among early childhood learners. The finding agrees with previous studies, which concluded that children whose parents actively participate in their learning are more likely to retain

knowledge and perform better academically after long school holidays. These findings underscore the importance of collaboration among parents, schools, and government in providing supportive learning opportunities during school breaks.

Conclusion

This study investigated the factors affecting summer learning loss among early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. The findings revealed that summer learning loss is a common educational challenge that affects the continuity of learning among young children during long school holidays. The study established that long school holidays, inadequate parental supervision, lack of reading activities, poor home literacy environment, limited access to digital learning resources, parental involvement and the absence of structured holiday learning programmes are major causes of summer learning loss among early childhood learners.

Based on these findings, the study concludes that reducing summer learning loss requires the combined efforts of parents, teachers, schools, government, other educational stakeholders and structured holiday learning opportunities will help sustain continuous learning and holistic educational development of early childhood learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Parents should encourage reading and other learning activities during school holidays.
- ii. Schools should organise holiday lessons and other structured learning programmes to reduce summer learning loss.
- iii. Teachers should give learners meaningful holiday assignments and holiday reading materials to promote continuous learning.
- iv. The government should provide adequate support and educational resources to enhance learning during school breaks.
- v. Parents, schools, and government should work together to ensure that children remain academically engaged throughout the holiday period.

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