# Article information:

Learning loss due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic | PNAS  
<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2022376118>

# Article summary:

1. School closures during the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a learning loss of about 3 percentile points or 0.08 standard deviations among primary school students in The Netherlands, according to a study using national examinations before and after lockdown.

2. The learning loss was most pronounced among students from disadvantaged homes, with losses up to 60% larger than the average student.

3. Despite favorable conditions such as equitable school funding and high rates of broadband access, students made little or no progress while learning from home, suggesting even larger losses in countries with weaker infrastructure or longer school closures.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article "Learning loss due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic" published in PNAS presents a study on the impact of school closures on primary school performance in The Netherlands. The study uses data from national examinations taken before and after lockdown and compares progress during this period to the same period in the three previous years. The results show that students experienced a learning loss of about 3 percentile points or 0.08 standard deviations, equivalent to one-fifth of a school year, with losses up to 60% larger among students from less-educated homes.

The article provides valuable insights into the impact of school closures on student learning, particularly for disadvantaged students. However, there are some potential biases and limitations to consider. Firstly, the study only focuses on primary schools in The Netherlands, which may limit its generalizability to other countries with different education systems and infrastructure. Secondly, while the study uses a difference-in-differences design to address confounding factors, it is still possible that unobserved factors could influence the results.

Additionally, while the article notes that The Netherlands is a "best-case" scenario with favorable conditions such as short lockdowns and high rates of broadband access, it does not explore how these factors may have influenced the results. For example, it is possible that longer lockdowns or weaker infrastructure could lead to even greater learning losses.

Furthermore, while the article notes concerns about unequal impacts on disadvantaged students, it does not explore potential solutions or policy implications for addressing these disparities. It also does not consider potential counterarguments or alternative perspectives on school closures during the pandemic.

Overall, while the article provides important insights into the impact of school closures on student learning during the pandemic, it is important to consider its limitations and potential biases when interpreting its findings. Further research is needed to fully understand how school closures have affected student learning across different contexts and populations.

# Topics for further research:

* Long-term effects of school closures on student learning
* Strategies for mitigating learning loss during school closures
* Impact of school closures on mental health and well-being of students
* Equity implications of school closures for disadvantaged students
* Comparative analysis of school closure policies across different countries
* Debate on the effectiveness of remote learning during school closures

# Report location:

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