



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

IOE
LONDON

Young Lives 
An International Study of Childhood Poverty

Learning Outcomes, School Quality and Equity: What is Different about the Vietnamese System?

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VIETNAM IN PISA

- First participated 2012
- Overall results higher than USA, UK, comparable with Belgium and Germany
- Per capita income (and education spending) lowest among 65 countries, comparable with India
- PISA survey results show, by comparison with OECD averages:
 - Very high levels of parental expectations with regard to academic performance
 - Very high attendance at additional tuition
 - High amounts of time spent on homework
 - Very low levels of truancy and lateness
 - Low levels of school autonomy (centralisation)
 - High levels of ‘external accountability’
 - High levels of indicators of ‘quality assurance’ and of ‘teacher monitoring’

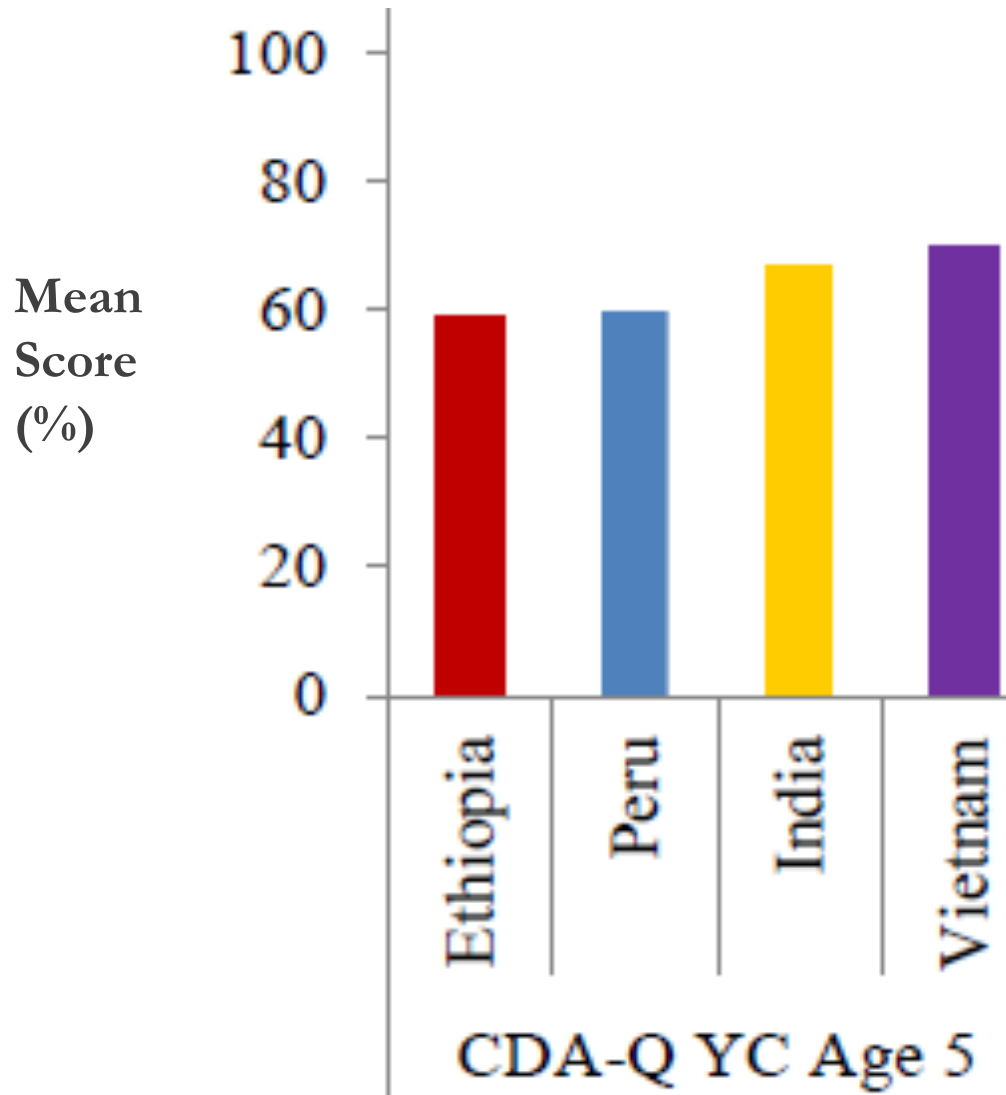
YOUNG LIVES STUDY

Young Lives longitudinal survey of children, households & communities every 3 years since 2002

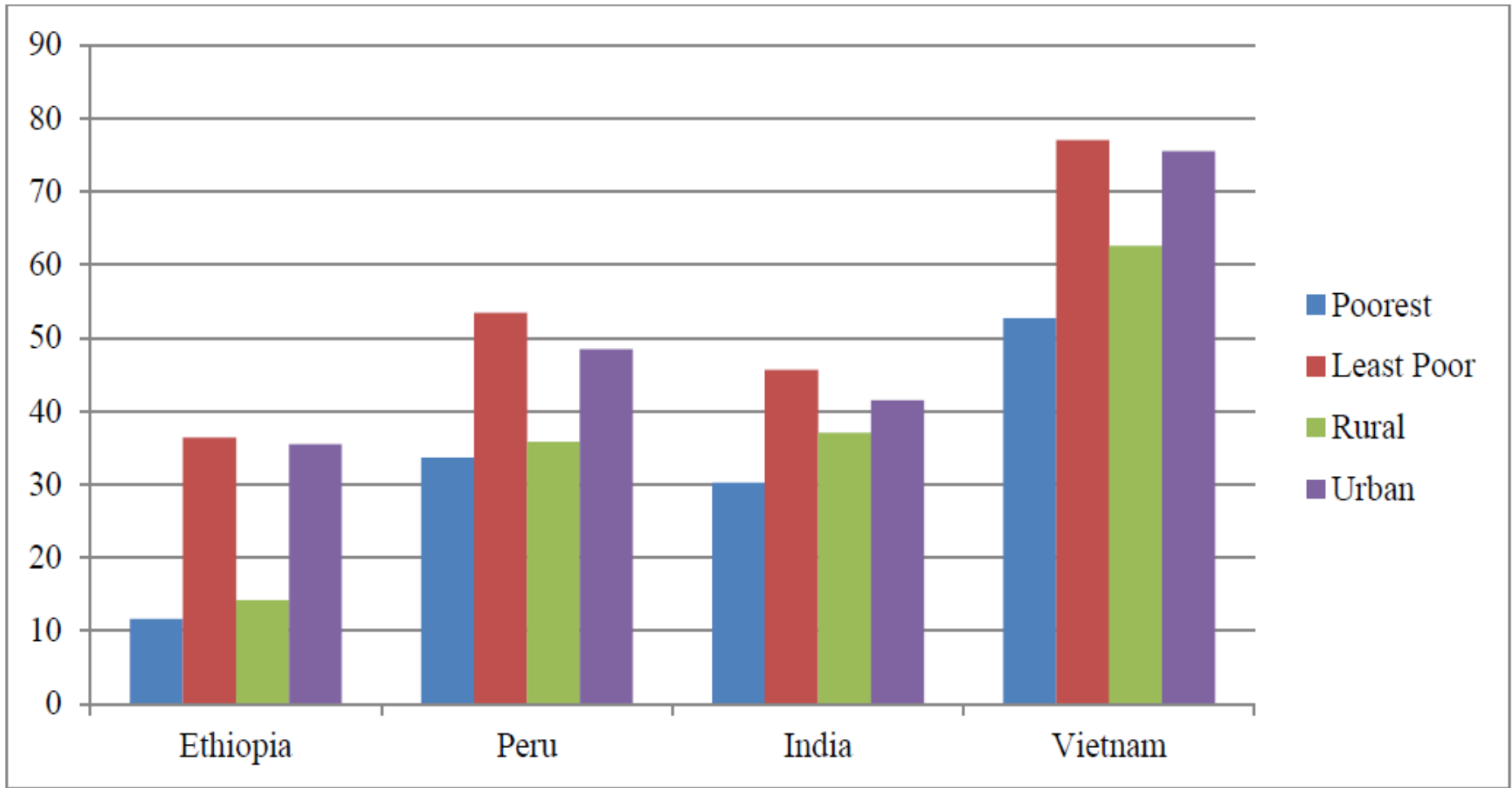


- 12,000 index children
- Two cohorts now aged 13 and 19
- Ethiopia, India, Peru, Vietnam
- Includes comparable learning assessments of maths and literacy
- Detailed school surveys since 2010
- In Vietnam focus on G5 (age 10-11) conducted in 2011-12

HOUSEHOLD TEST DATA: AT AGE 5 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT LEVELS ARE SIMILAR



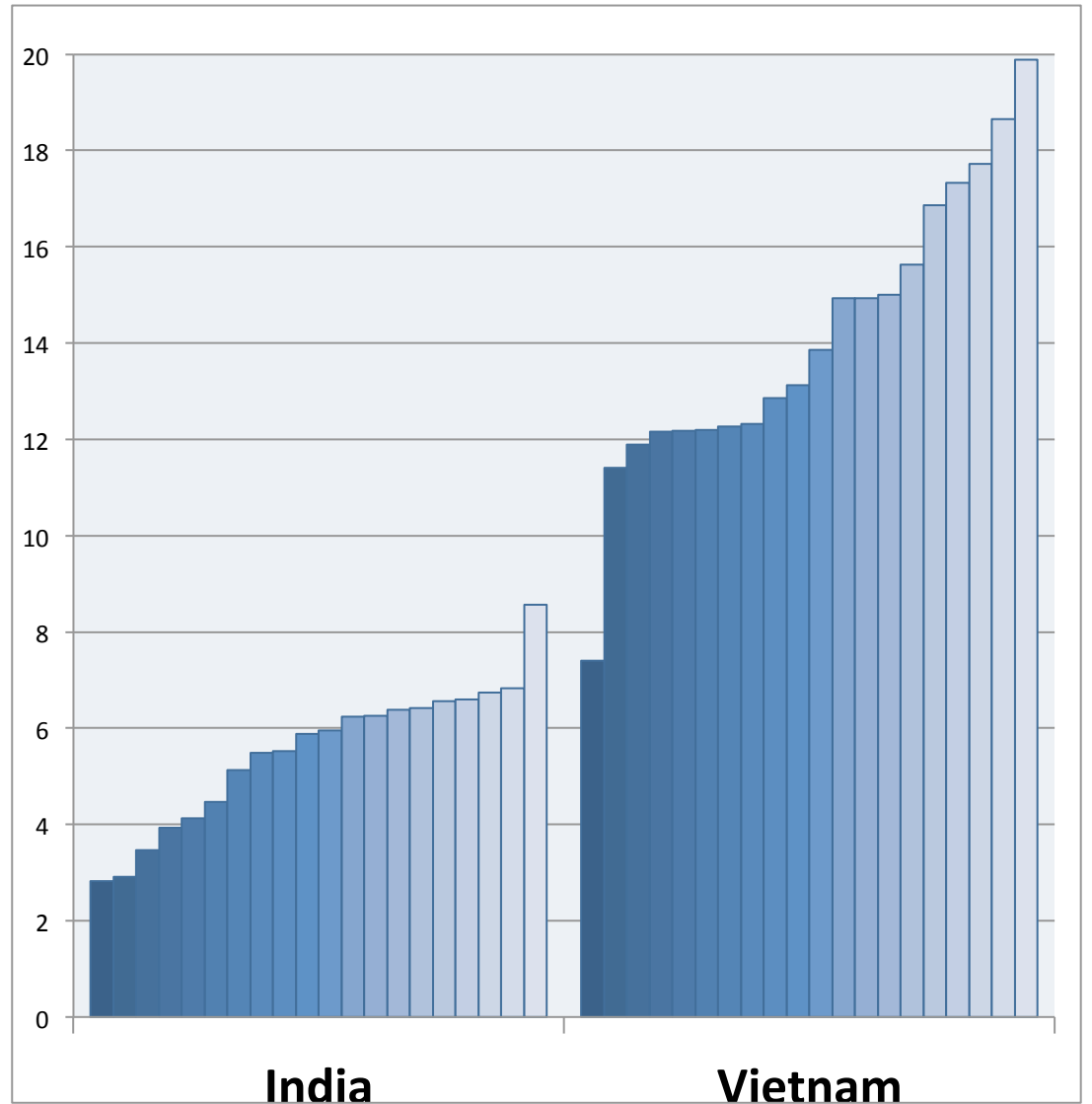
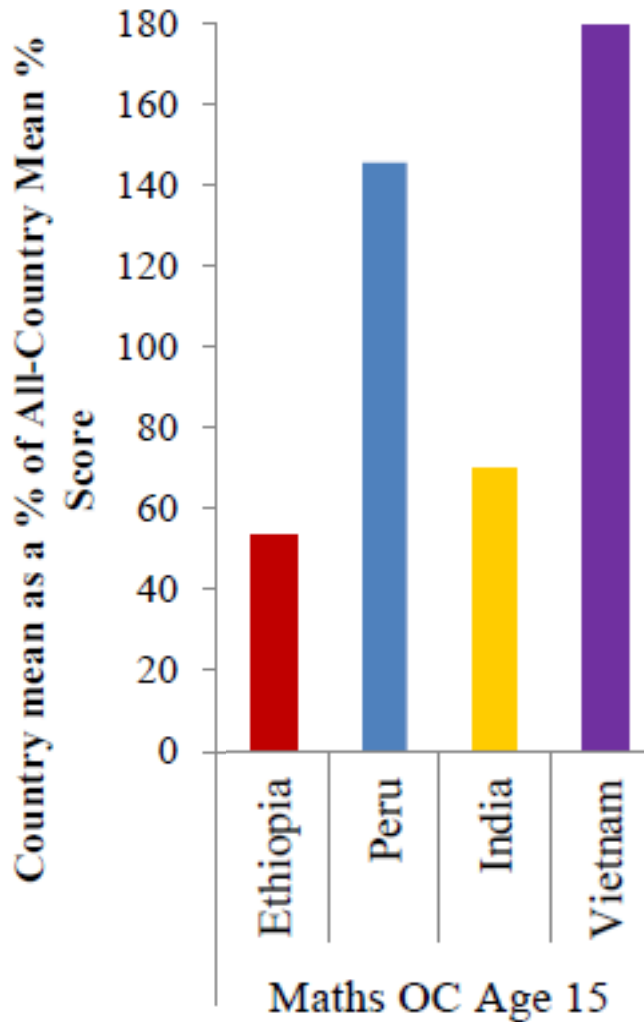
BY AGE 8 CHILDREN IN VIETNAM OUTPERFORM OTHER COUNTRIES IN MATHS. THE POOREST IN VIETNAM PERFORM BETTER THAN ALMOST ALL OTHERS



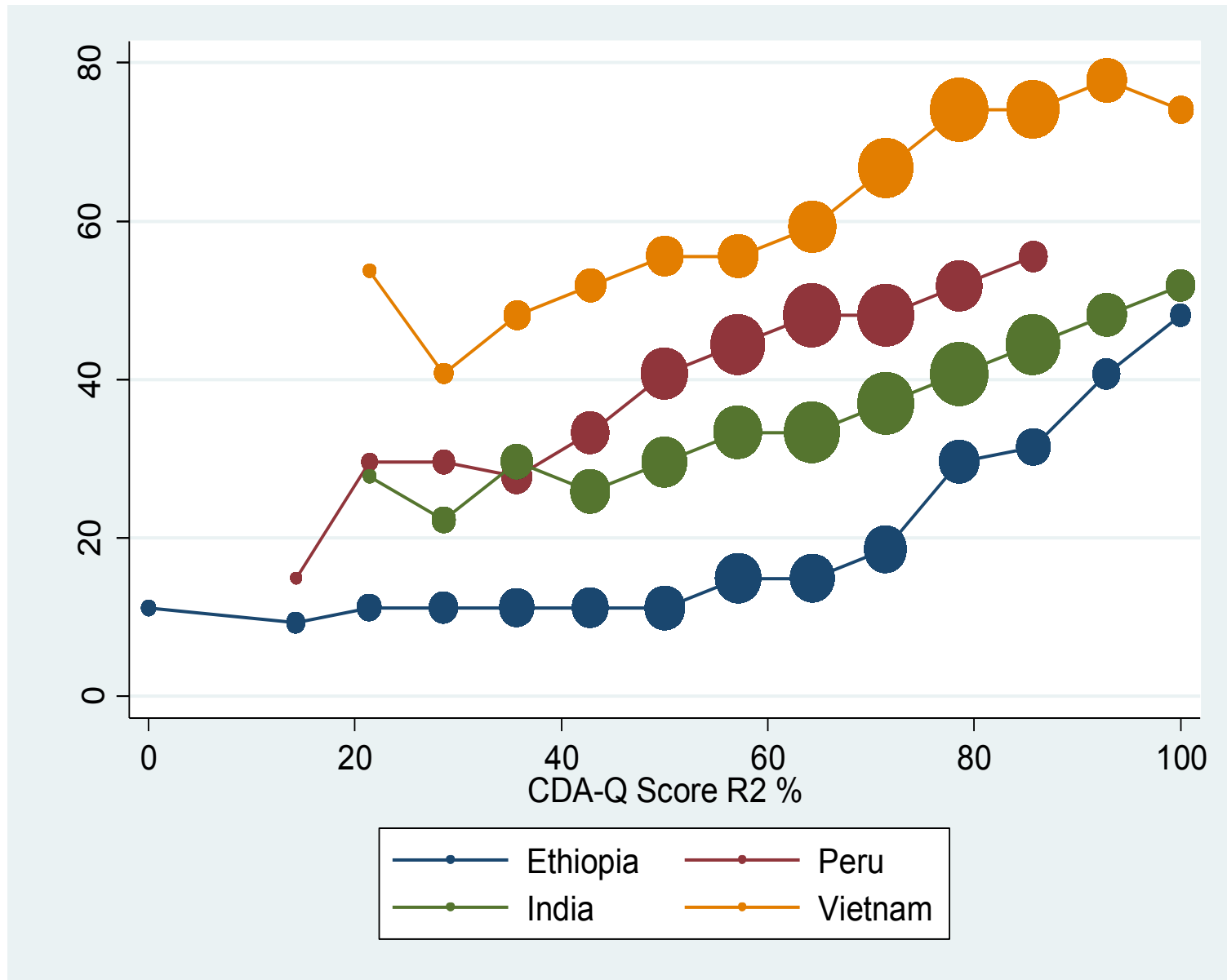
Mean (Household) Maths Test Scores at Age 8 (%)

BY AGE 15 THE GAP IN MATHS PERFORMANCE BETWEEN VIETNAM AND INDIA IS VERY LARGE

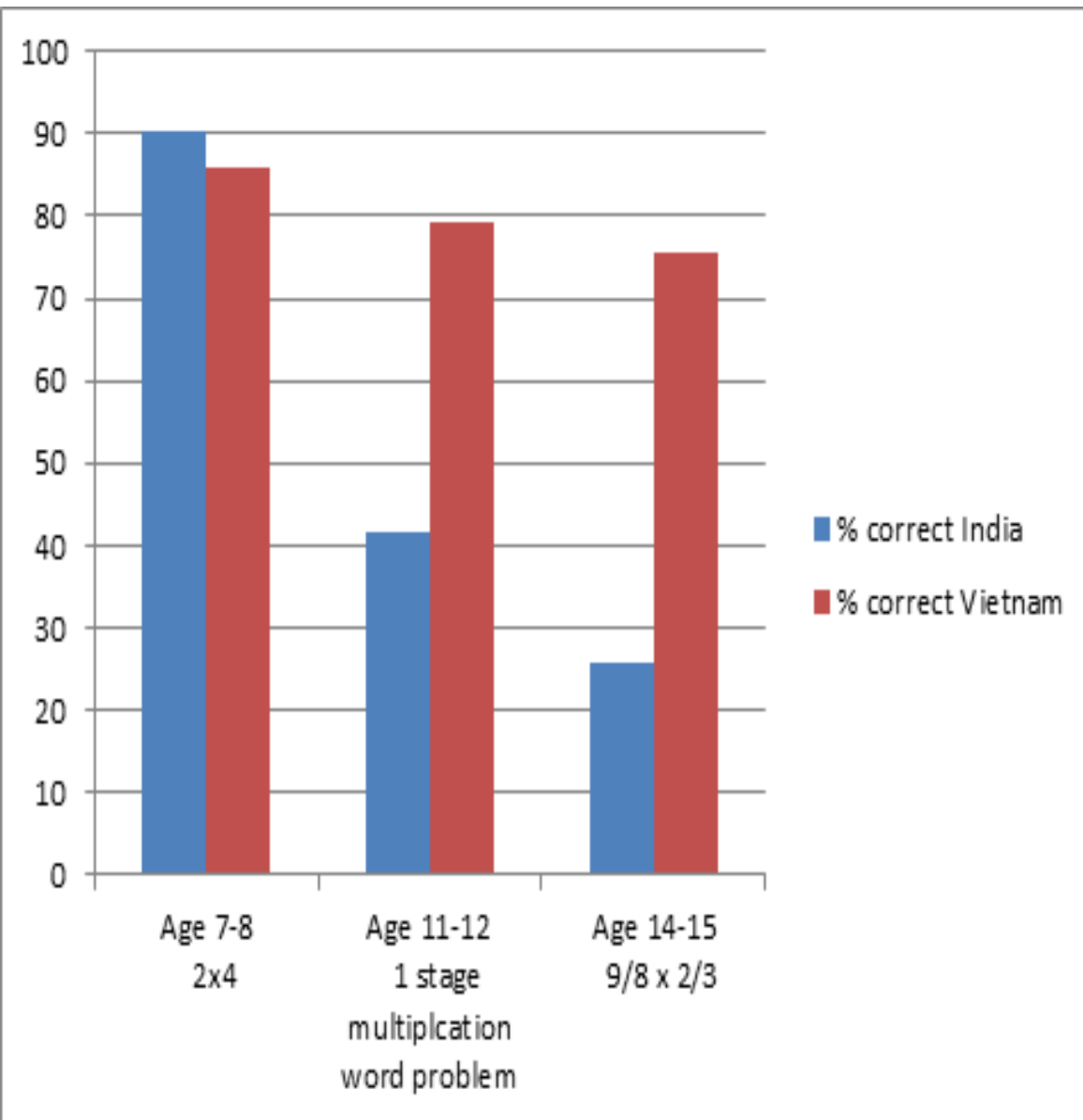
Site-level average maths score at age 14-15



WIDENING GAPS ARE DRIVEN BY DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING PROGRESS OVER TIME BETWEEN SYSTEMS: E.G. AGE 5 TO 8



WHILE PUPILS IN VIETNAM KEEP UP WITH THE CURRICULUM, IN INDIA THEY FALL PROGRESSIVELY BEHIND



Pupils' abilities remain in-line with the curriculum in Vietnam but the curriculum in India is progressively 'over-ambitious'

(pupils fail to progress according to expectations)

INDICATIONS ARE THAT HIGH PERFORMANCE BEGINS EARLY:

MATHS PERFORMANCE AT AGE 10 (GRADE 5)

18. Calculate:

$$\frac{3}{5} - \frac{1}{3} = \dots\dots\dots$$

A. $\frac{2}{5}$

B. $\frac{2}{2}$

C. $\frac{2}{15}$

D. $\frac{4}{15}$

81%

16. Calculate x in the following equation:

$$x + \frac{4}{5} = \frac{3}{2}$$

A. $\frac{1}{10}$

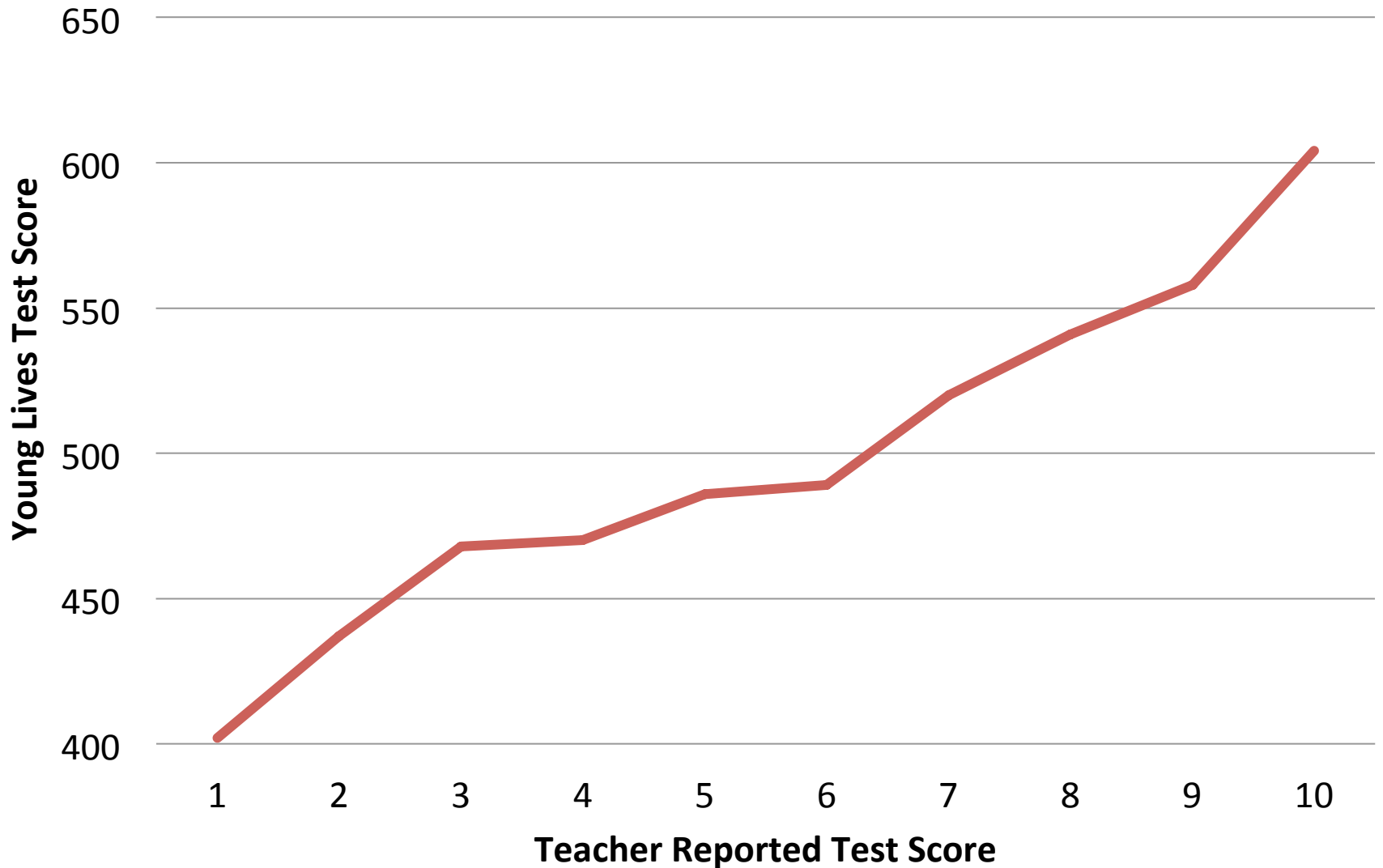
B. $\frac{6}{5}$

C. $\frac{7}{7}$

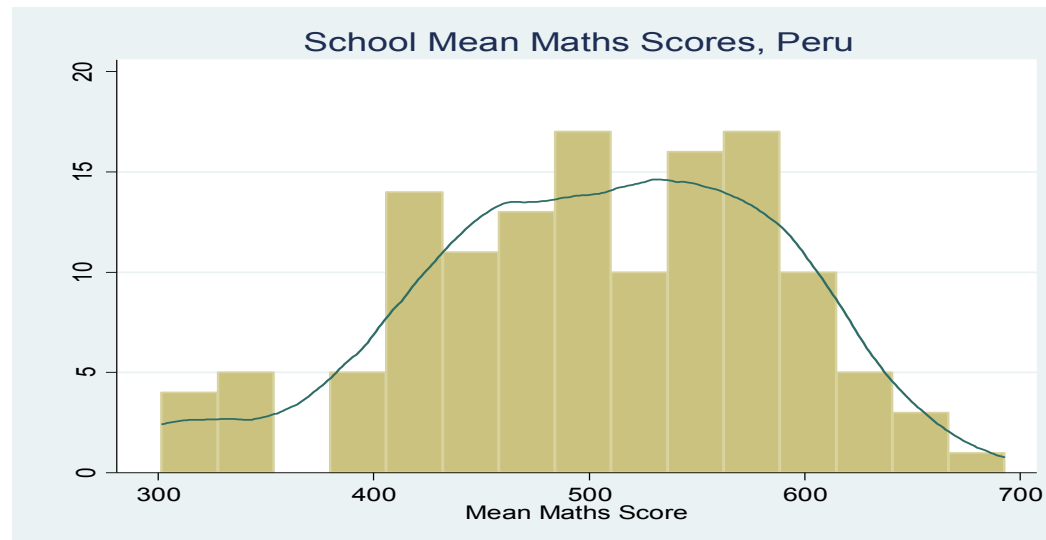
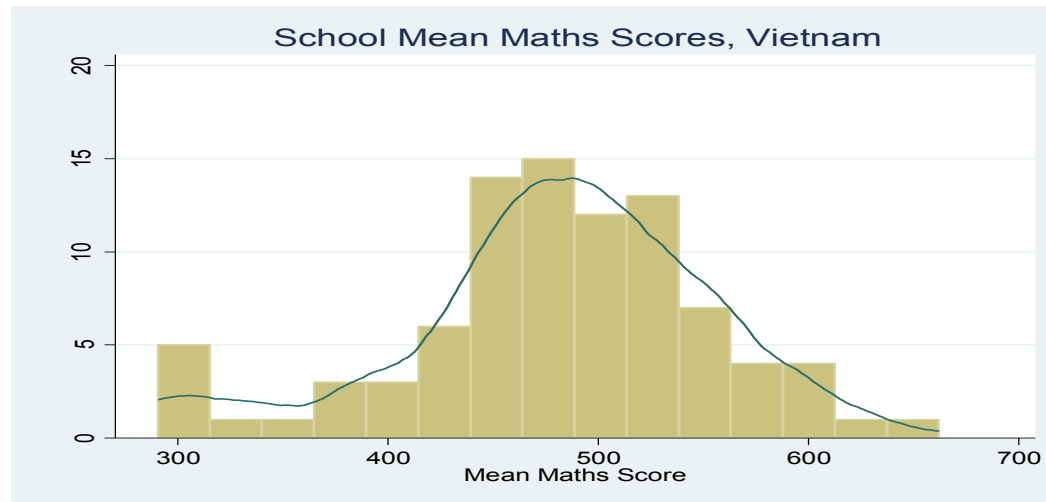
D. $\frac{7}{10}$

84%

TEACHERS IN VIETNAM KNOW WHAT PUPILS KNOW (AND NEED TO KNOW)

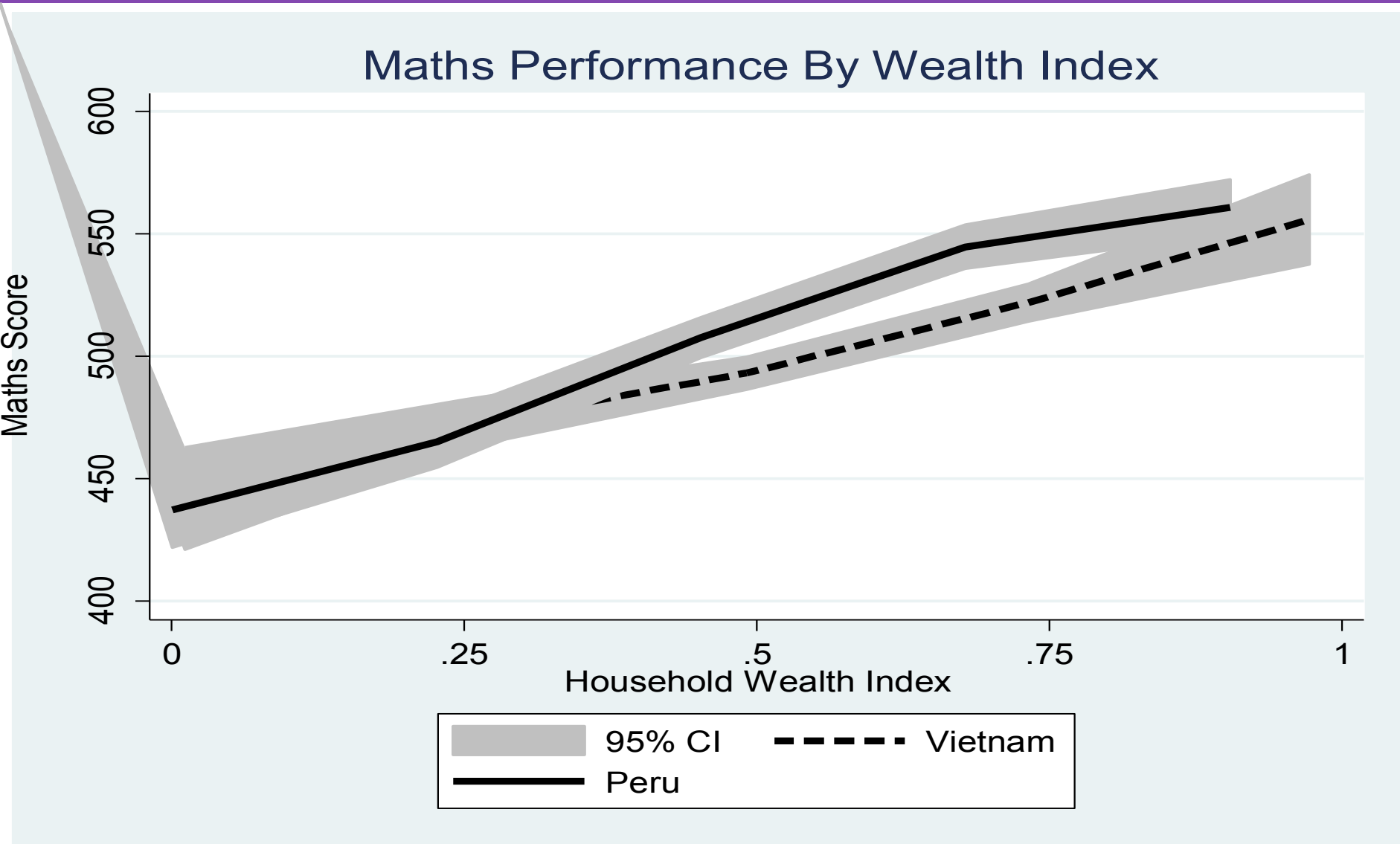


EQUITY: TEST SCORES VARY BETWEEN SCHOOLS IN PERU AND VIETNAM BUT ARE LESS DISPERSED IN VIETNAM

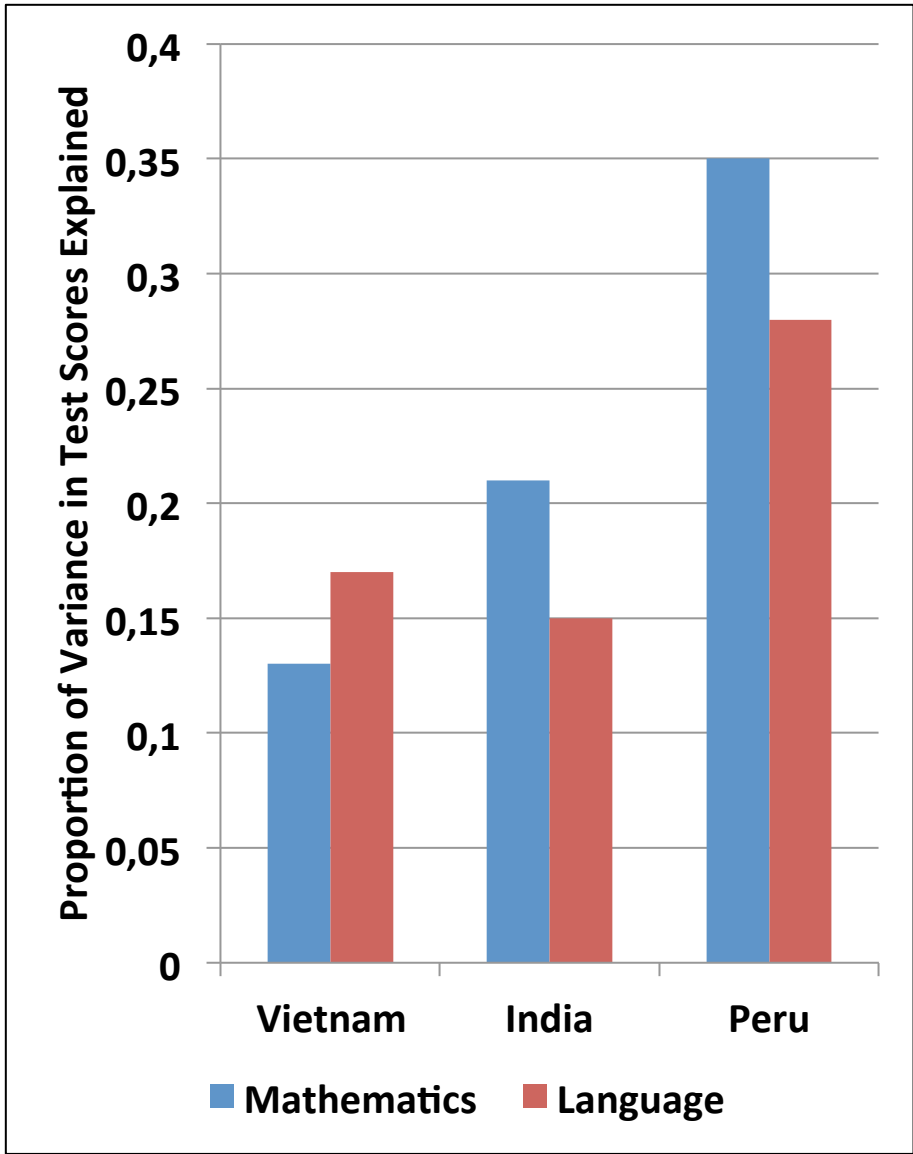


School test scores scaled to mean 500 and standard deviation 100

EQUITY: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEST SCORES AND HOME BACKGROUND AT AGE 10 IS STRONGER IN PERU THAN VIETNAM



CHILDREN'S HOME BACKGROUNDS EXPLAIN MORE OF THE VARIANCE IN ATTAINMENT IN INDIA AND PERU THAN IN VIETNAM



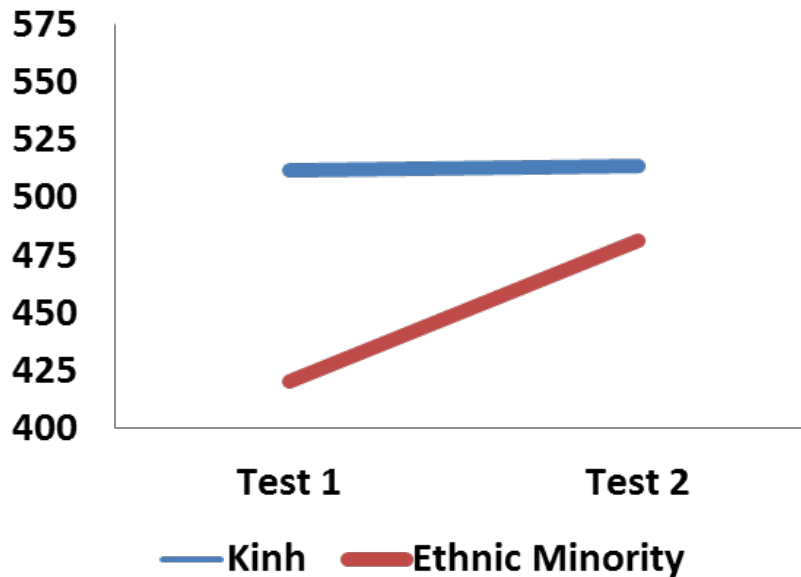
Controlling for pre-school scores, children's home backgrounds (at age 5) explain much more of the variation in test scores (at age 11) in Peru than in Vietnam or India

In maths, backgrounds account for a large proportion of the variance in Peru and much less in Vietnam

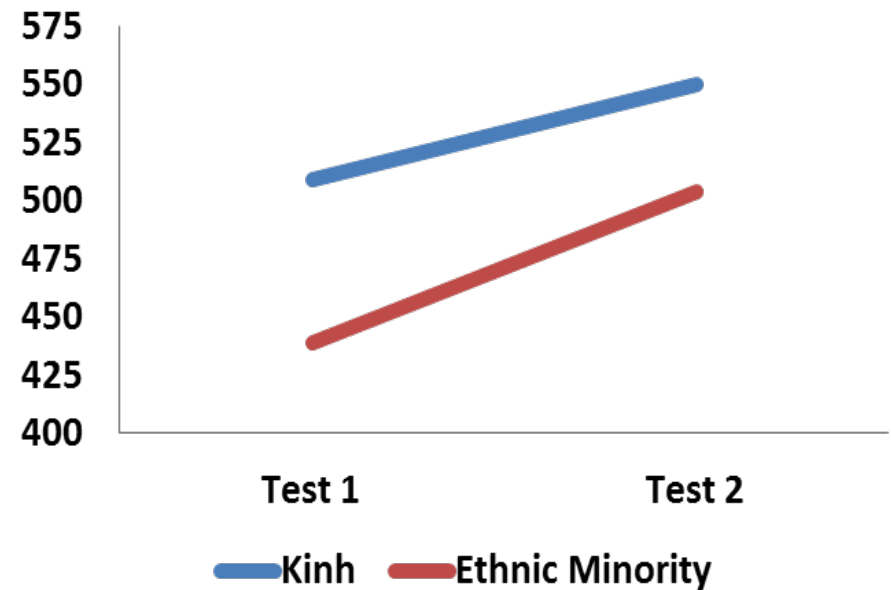
Systems where background effects are large are arguably more inequitable - 'reproducing' home advantage/disadvantage

IN VIETNAM, ETHNIC MINORITY PUPILS PERFORM LESS WELL THAN KINH, BUT NO EVIDENCE THAT THE GAP WIDENS DUE TO SCHOOLING IN G5

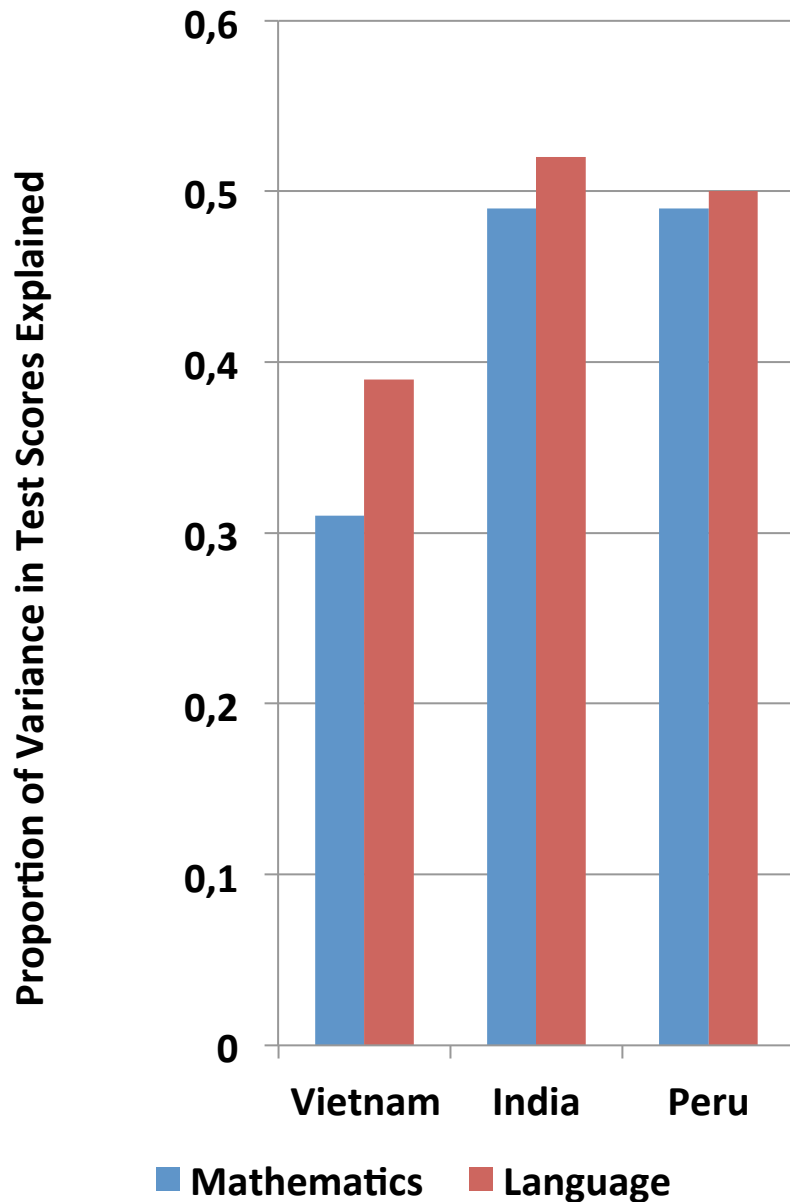
Vietnamese



Mathematics

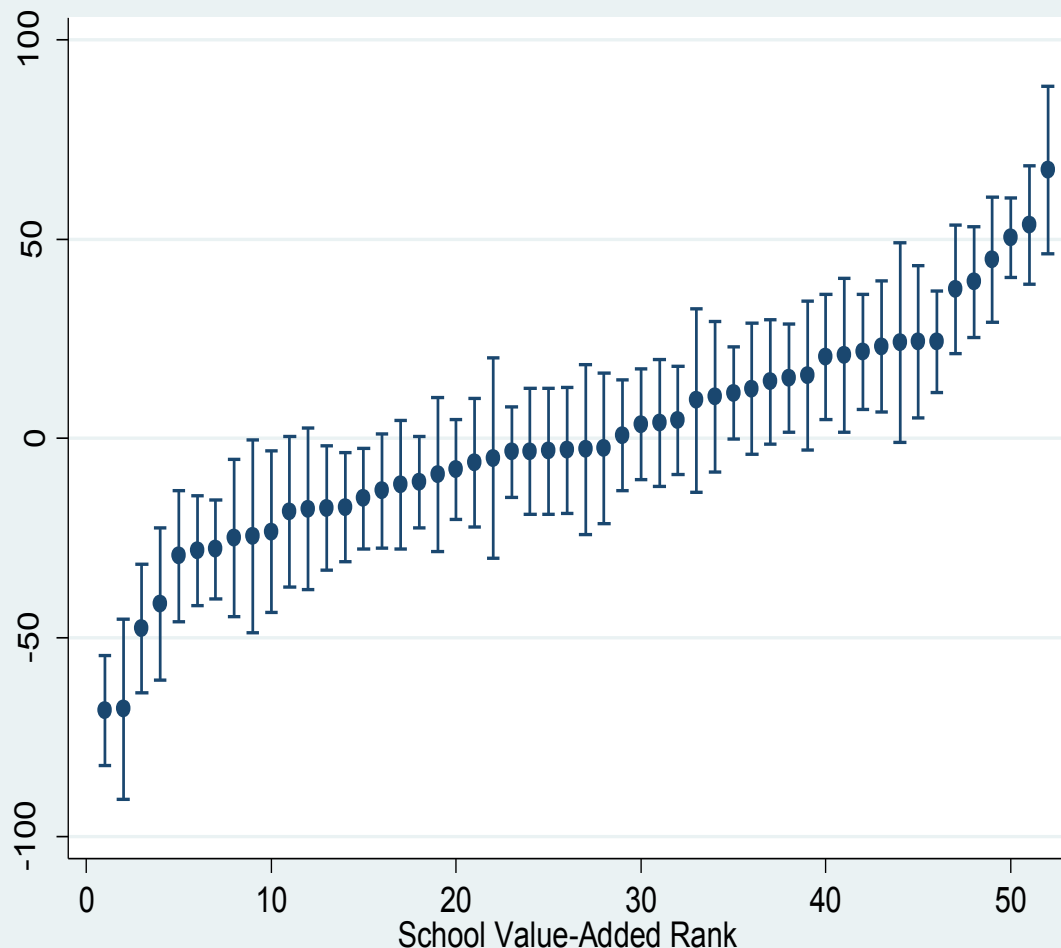


SCHOOLS EXPLAIN MORE OF THE VARIANCE IN ATTAINMENT IN INDIA AND PERU COMPARED WITH VIETNAM



- ‘School fixed effects’ capture school-level factors (school quality), controlling for pupil backgrounds, pre-school test scores
- School quality in India and Peru accounts for more of the variance in test scores than in Vietnam
- School systems in Peru and India more heterogeneous, school a child attends appears to matter more than in Vietnam

SOME SCHOOLS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OTHERS IN VIETNAM, BUT THIS IS NOT STRONGLY LINKED TO PUPILS' BACKGROUNDS



Which Schools Add More Value?

Not particularly those with more advantaged pupils

Slightly better physical resources

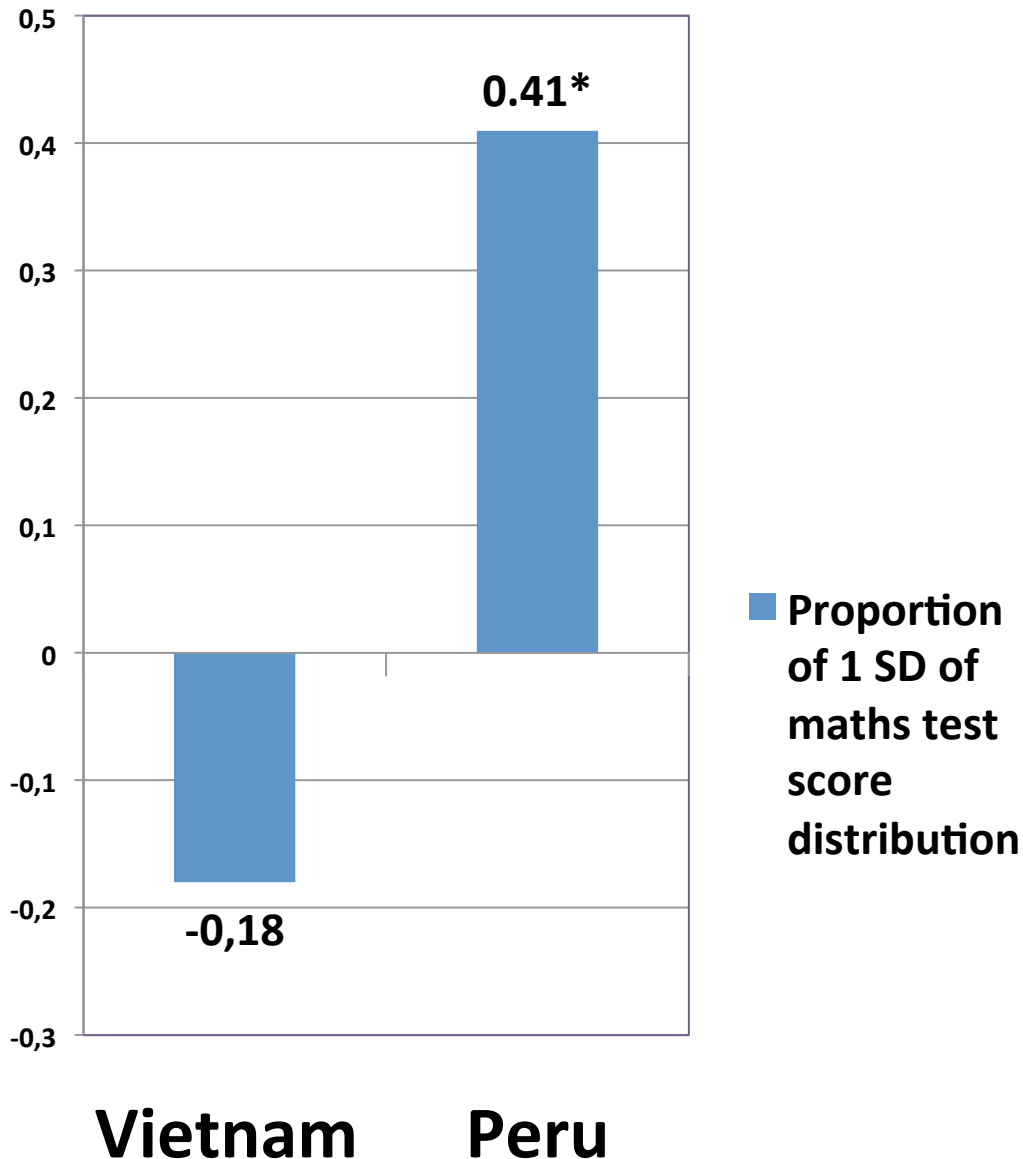
Not better teacher subject knowledge

More positive teacher attitudes e.g.

“The influence of a student’s home experience can be overcome by good teaching”

Teachers more often evaluated

WITHIN THE SAME SCHOOL, DISADVANTAGED PUPILS MAKE LESS PROGRESS IN PERU, BUT NOT IN VIETNAM



Who benefits from an increase in school quality? – compare effect on richest 40% to poorest 60% (separate FE)

In Vietnam, schools are equally effective in teaching Maths to children irrespectively of their background.

In Peru, by contrast, schools significantly less effective at teaching children from disadvantaged backgrounds

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THE VIETNAMESE SYSTEM?

- High effort, motivation, aspirations linked to culture and history (Confucian heritage, socialism) not necessarily education system

Equity-oriented centralised public school system

- Less evidence that disadvantaged pupils attend lower quality schools
- <1% attend private schools
- Less evidence that schools are less effective for disadvantaged pupils

High-performance for the majority linked to equity orientation

- Emphasis on ‘fundamental’ or minimum school quality levels (especially in disadvantaged areas)
- Common (centralised) appropriate curricula & text books in use matched closely to pupils’ learning levels
- Focused curriculum (e.g. 6 basic subjects only at primary level)
- Commitment to ‘mastery’ by all pupils, emphasis on effort/work not ability - use of regular assessment by teachers
- Teacher knowledge (YL curriculum tests) is similar between more and less disadvantaged areas, absenteeism is low across almost all schools

CAVEATS:

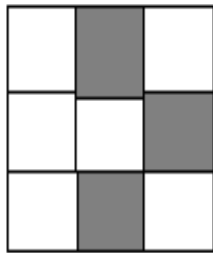
- Effect of extra classes and private tuition difficult to account for
- High drop-out prior to age 15 may suggest PISA results are an overestimate

Table 6: Drop-Out between Ages 12 and 15 by Achievement at Age 12 (Older Cohort)

	Ethiopia (%)	Peru (%)	India (%)	Vietnam (%)
Total (all enrolled at Age 12)	9.54	8.76	9.61	23.40
Lowest Quartile Maths at Age 12	20.73	17.11	26.04	47.71
Highest Quartile Maths at Age 12	8.27	11.80	11.73	19.72

CAVEATS: PUPILS IN VIETNAM PERFORM VERY WELL ON EQUATIONS
...BUT POORLY ON PROBLEM SOLVING QUESTIONS AT AGE 10
(SUGGESTING ROTE LEARNING)

The fraction showing the highlighted parts in the following figure is:



39%

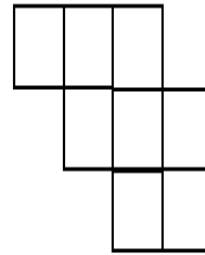
A. $\frac{3}{6}$

B. $\frac{1}{3}$

C. $\frac{6}{3}$

D. $\frac{3}{1}$

21. How many squares are there in the following figure?



33%

A. 2

B. 10

C. 9

D. 8

FINDING OUT MORE

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www.younglives.org.uk

