Young Lives
An International Study of Childhood Poverty

Educational Opportunity and Social Mobility in Vietnam

Preliminary Findings From School Survey Data

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THE VIETNAMESE SUCCESS STORY

- Since *Doi Moi* (renovation)(1986) Vietnam has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world
- Inclusive growth, at least until very recent years (poverty reduction from 58% to 16% 1993-2006)
- Strong improvements in education e.g. reduction from 23% to 1% in population with no schooling since 1992
- Falling birth rate and achievement of 'correct age for grade' enrolment has provided an opportunity to focus on improving quality in primary education

THE VIETNAMESE SUCCESS STORY

- Standards in mathematics and reading compare with those of many much richer countries (e.g. Hong Kong, New Zealand, Greece) (there are no international tests in Vietnam although PISA begins in 2012)
- This is despite continuing challenges of school infrastructure, low teacher salaries and the lowest number of instructional hours in the region
- **But** important disparities exist between more and less advantaged provinces and especially between Kinh and ethnic minorities

SOCIALISATION AND THE EQUITY CHALLENGE

- Vietnamese education law enshrines the principle of 'equal learning opportunities' for all citizens
- Targeted policies are employed to redress inequalities – especially targeting ethnic minorities, poor communes, disabled children
- Among these increased cost-sharing (*socialisation*) in more advantaged areas with subsidy in disadvantaged areas is a central pillar (e.g. full-day schooling attract fees in some communes but not in identified poor communes)
- Countervailing trends linked to rising incomes and aspirations nonetheless continually threaten to widen inequalities despite government policy – rising demand for private tuition, widening gaps at senior secondary and higher education levels at least partly counteract success of equalisation at primary level

THE YOUNG LIVES STUDY

- Longitudinal survey of 12,000 children in 4 countries over 15 years
- 'Sentinel site surveillance system' design
- Pro-poor sample: 20 sites in each country selected to reflect country diversity, rural-urban, livelihoods, ethnicity etc, roughly equal numbers of boys and girls
- From infancy to parenthood
- Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh), Peru, Vietnam
- Two age cohorts in each country:

  - 2,000 children born in 2000-01 (now aged 11)

  - 1,000 children born in 1994-95 (now aged 17)
- Household and Community Surveys in 5 Rounds (2002, 2006, 2009, 2013, 2017)
- Open access data archive

THE SCHOOL SURVEYS

- School surveys introduced in 2010 to examine the educational experience of Young Lives children at key stages
- additional dimension to the longitudinal data collected at households, permitting robust examination of the relationships between educational access and achievement and poverty
- conducted in all four countries, with differences in design reflecting context and research/policy priorities
- In Vietnam, focus on achievement in Grade 5 using longitudinal (value-added) design whereby pupils are assessed twice in the academic year
- Pupils' non-cognitive skills (academic self-concept including academic confidence and academic effort) also assessed twice in the year

THE SCHOOL SURVEY IN VIETNAM

- Covers YL younger cohort pupils (age 10) and their class peers (up to a total sample 20 per class)
- Total sample 3284 pupils in Grade 5
- Data collection Round 1 (Autumn 2011) - covered child, teacher, class, principal and school characteristics
- Data collection Round 2 (Summer 2012) - the child progress measures (attendance, cognitive and non-cognitive skills)

DOES THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP BY HOME BACKGROUND WIDEN OR NARROW IN G5?

CREATING A COMPARABLE HOME BACKGROUND INDEX (HBI)

Variable	Mean/Proportion	Factor Loading
Landline telephone	0.3678	0.1624
Television	0.9461	0.2074
Study desk	0.8767	**0.2860**
Fan	0.8907	0.1995
Computer	**0.2287**	0.2273
Mobile phone	0.9135	0.1444
Bicycle	0.8560	0.1777
Study chair	0.8730	**0.2674**
Air conditioning	0.1108	0.1706
Internet	0.1821	0.2124
Radio	0.2655	0.1356
Motorcycle	0.8901	0.1453
Study lamp	0.7217	**0.2568**
Car	0.0807	0.1049
Calculator	0.3167	0.1762
Own place to study	0.7980	**0.2472**
Number of meals per day	2.8282	0.0709
Number of books in the home>10	0.4547	0.2184
Speaks Vietnamese at home (always)	**0.9123**	**0.2986**
Ethnic Minority	**0.1245**	**-0.2859**
Mother Vietnamese literacy	0.9207	**0.2952**

MOST/LEAST ADVANTAGED SITES BY HBI

Site	Province	Home Background	Maths Prior	Vietnamese Prior	Maths Progress	Vietnamese Progress	Ethnic Minority	Own Study Place	Mother College	N
9	Lao Cai	-7.27	39.22	44.32	13.46	10.14	0.99	0.14	0.01	140
12	Lao Cai	-2.22	52.86	56.60	6.79	8.91	0.62	0.50	0.03	175
10	Lao Cai	-1.39	53.32	55.93	10.31	8.33	0.60	0.72	0.11	127
3	Phu Yen	-1.20	41.12	54.92	9.61	3.76	0.32	0.71	0.06	180
11	Lao Cai	-0.77	52.44	57.91	4.96	0.82	0.33	0.59	0.05	120
19	Danang	0.71	49.99	57.04	4.78	2.82	0.00	0.87	0.11	120
14	Hun Yen	0.84	58.00	59.06	7.32	5.19	0.01	0.90	0.10	180
20	Danang	0.97	59.14	64.60	2.75	1.61	0.01	0.88	0.17	200
17	Danang	1.69	62.35	70.26	7.50	1.39	0.01	0.91	0.26	264
18	Danang	2.52	65.17	70.37	5.33	2.93	0.02	0.98	0.54	300

RESULTS: ACHIEVEMENT OVERALL IS HIGHAT AGE 10, ESPECIALLY IN MATHS

18. Calculate:

$$\frac{3}{5} - \frac{1}{3} = \text{.....}$$

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. $\frac{1}{10}$

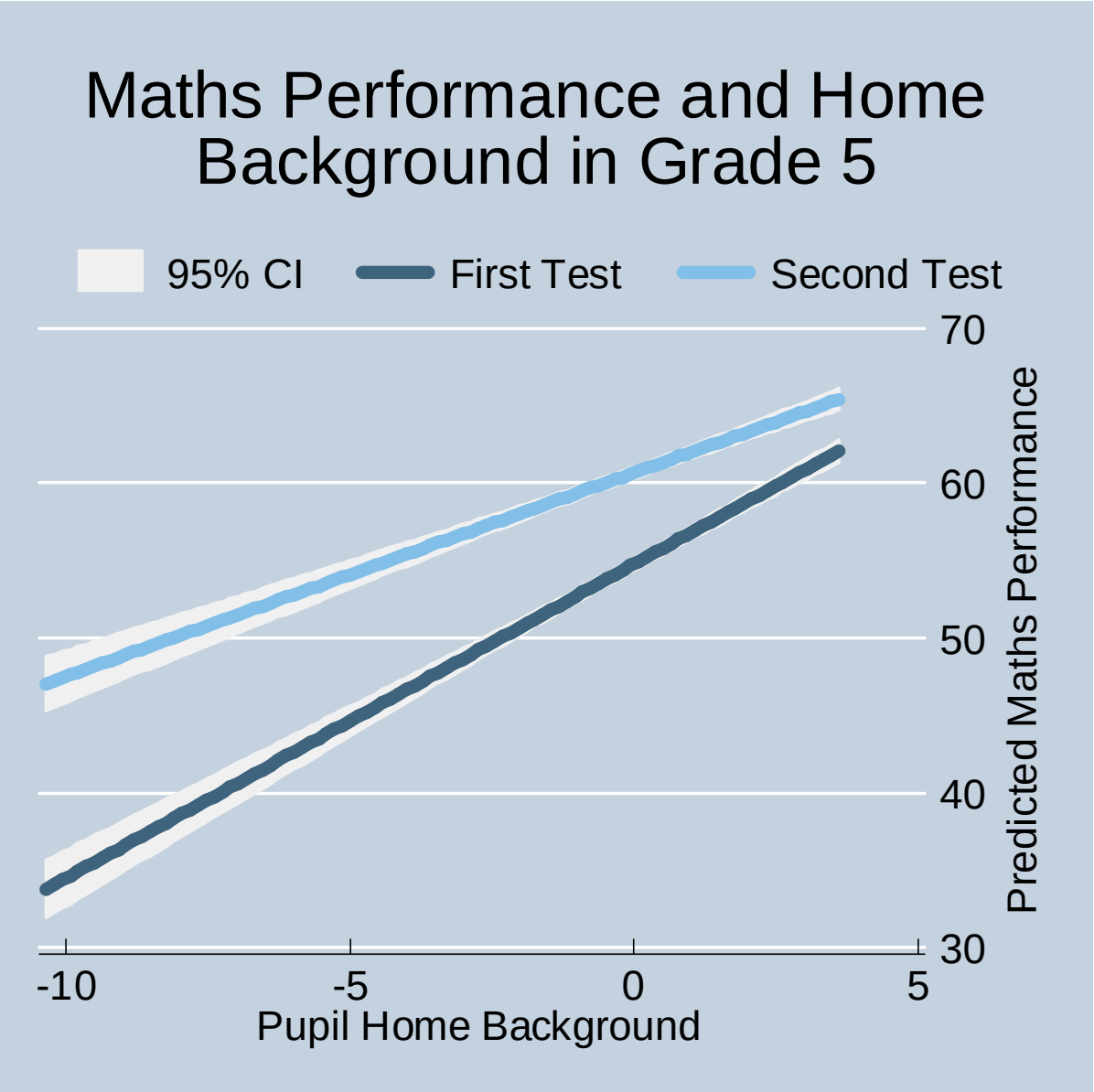
B. $\frac{6}{5}$

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

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

84%

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GAPS BY HOME BACKGROUND DURING GRADE 5?



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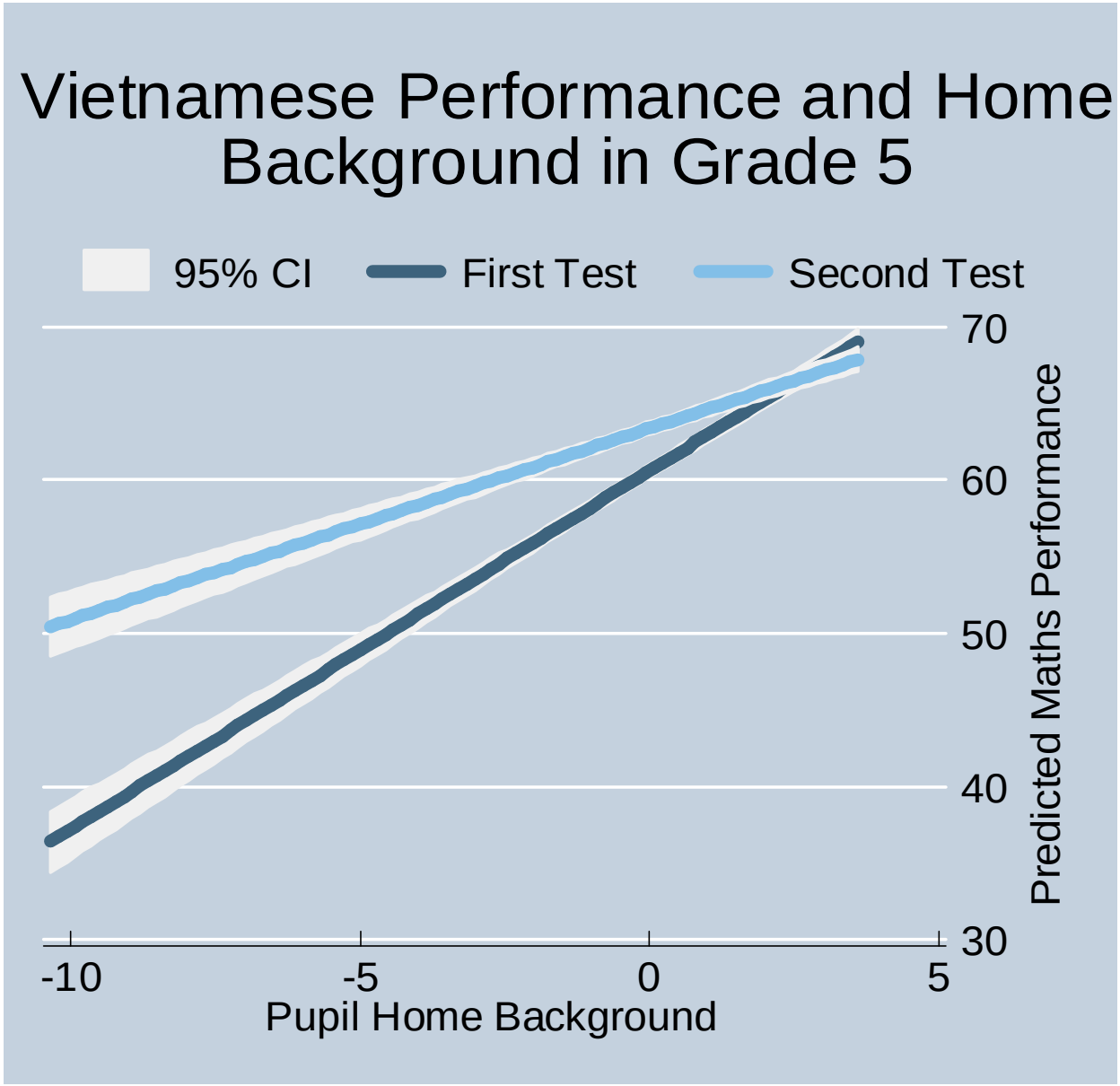
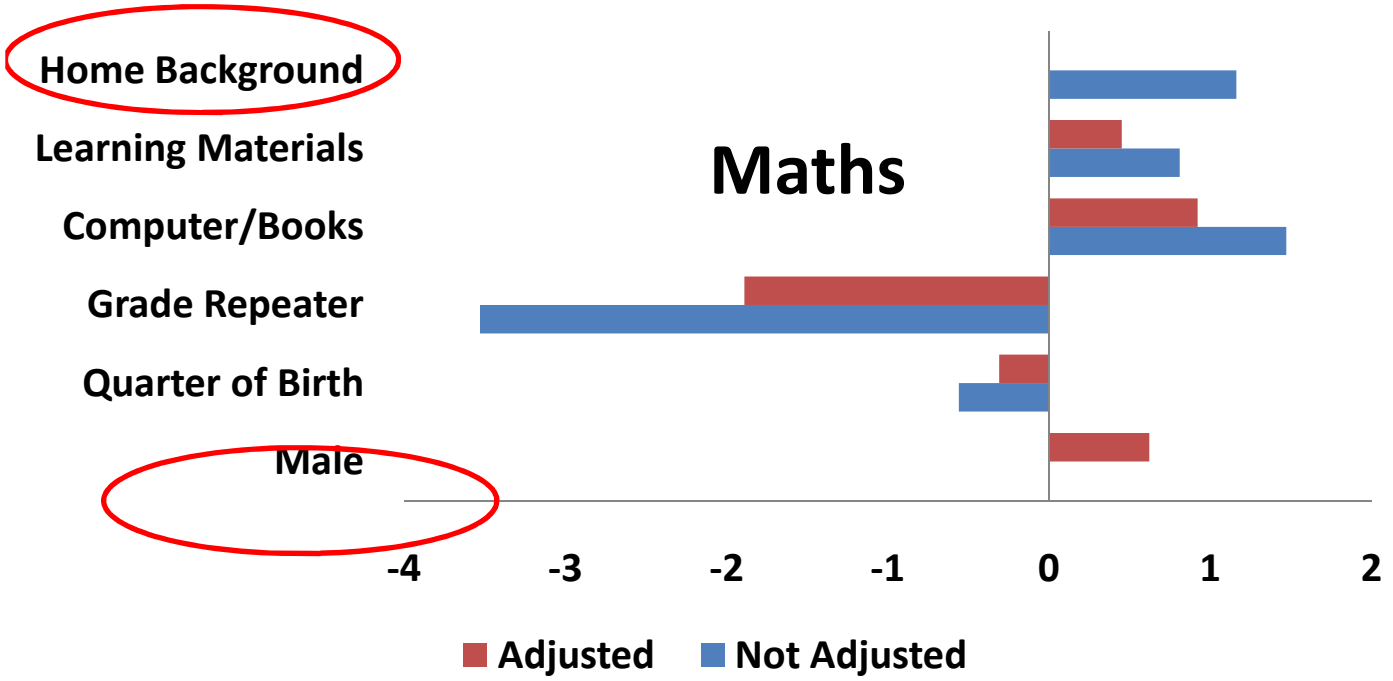
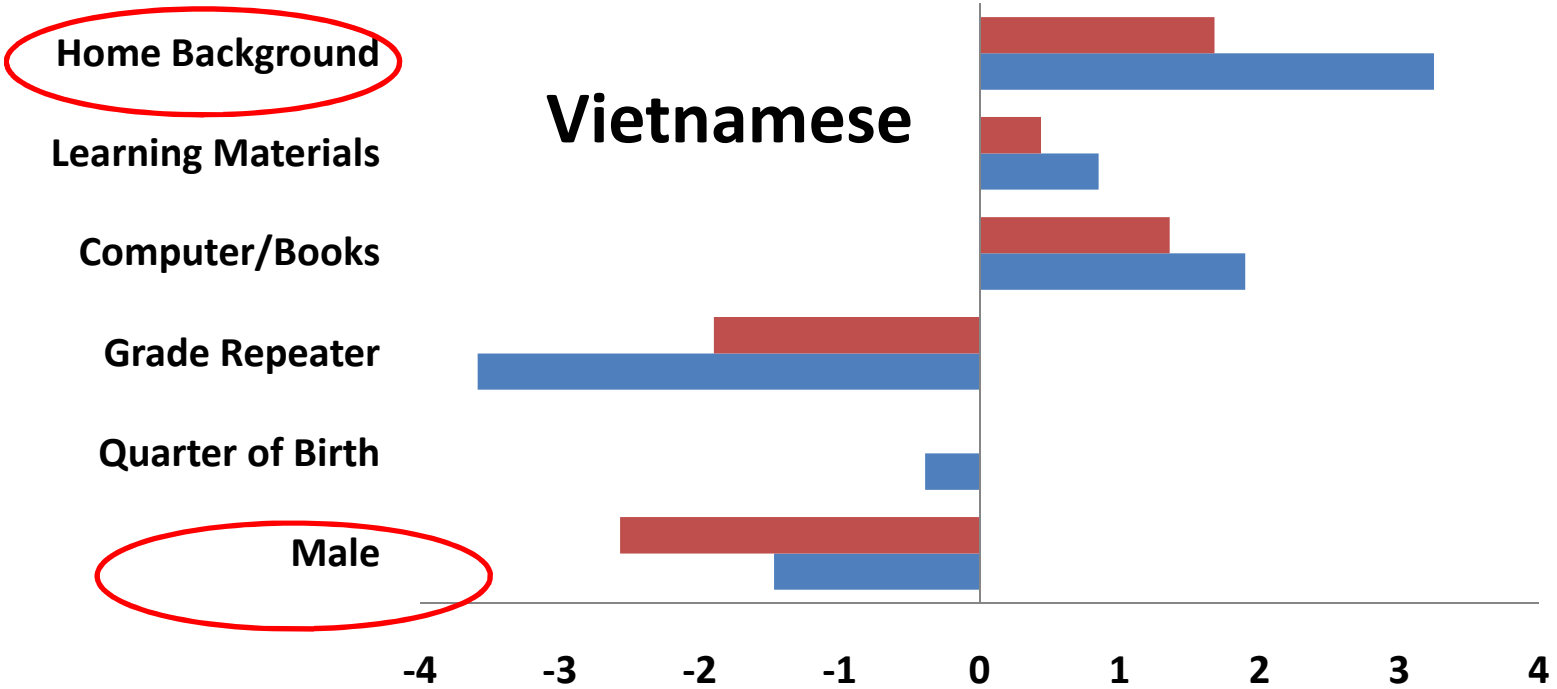


WHAT EXPLAINS THE NARROWING GAP? DOES THE HOME BACKGROUND EFFECT DECLINE?

- Ethnic minorities and pupils with less advantaged backgrounds perform less well in maths and Vietnamese both at the initial and second tests
- Less advantaged pupils make less progress in Vietnamese but in maths they make no less progress
- No HBI effect on maths progress (comparing pupils in the same class) but significant effect on Vietnamese
- Does the HBI effect explain the narrowing gap? **No.**

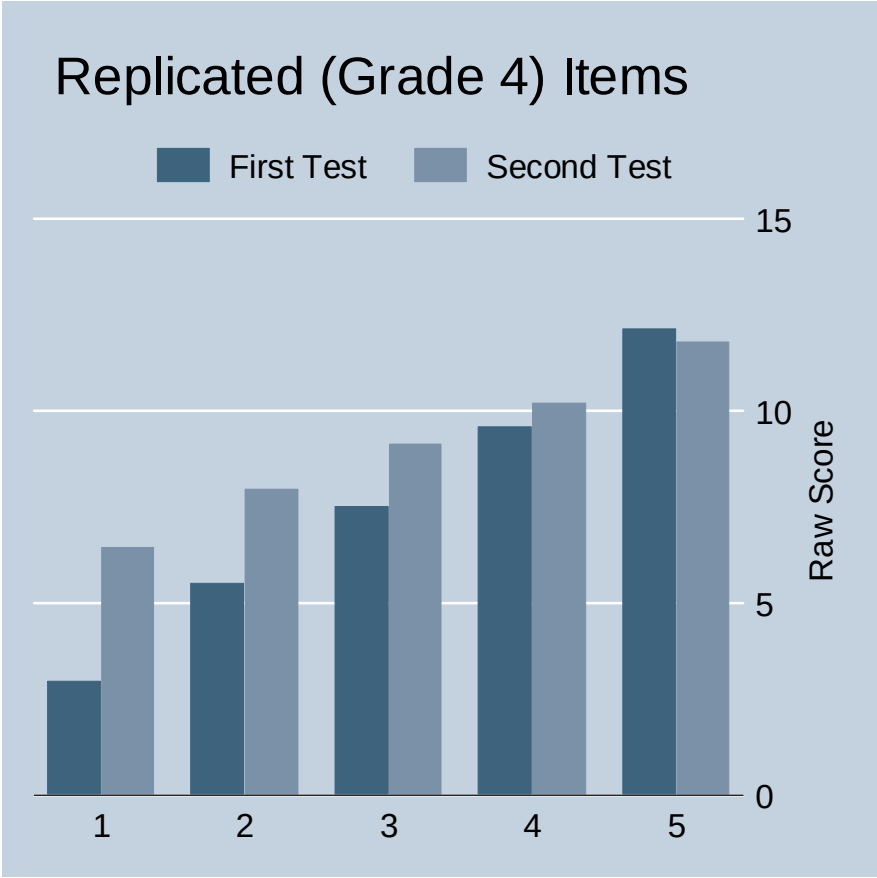


Significant Effects on G5 End of Year Test Scores (Within Classes)



NARROWING GAP IS PARTLY EXPLAINED BY CATCH-UP ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S CURRICULUM (G4) BY WEAKER PUPILS

- Gaps between initially low and high performers on the tests narrowed because low performing pupils made more gains regardless of their home backgrounds
- Progress is strongly clustered at the class level
- Evidence that Vietnamese teachers focus on 'mastery' by the whole class rather than differentiated progress by ability
- Evidence that the curriculum is not hugely 'over-ambitious' (compared for example to India)



WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BEST AND WORST PERFORMING CLASSES (VALUE-ADDED ADJUSTING FOR PUPIL, TEACHER AND SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS)

	maths		Vietnamese	
	bottom	**top**	**bottom**	**top**
Age	10.29	10.27	10.27	10.22
Test R1	55.93	57.87	60.53	61.68
Test R2	55.26	69.92***	54.64	72.23***
Home Background	0.29	**-0.57*** **	-0.40	**-0.08** **
Ethnic Minority	0.10	**0.17*** **	0.13	0.12
Stress	-0.04	**0.22*** **	-0.06	**0.30*** **
Specialist Teacher	0.10	**0.38** **	0.26	**0.34*** **
Class assets	0.62	0.09***	0.09	0.35***
Fees paid	326.9	**298.9*** **	345.8	**312.6*** **

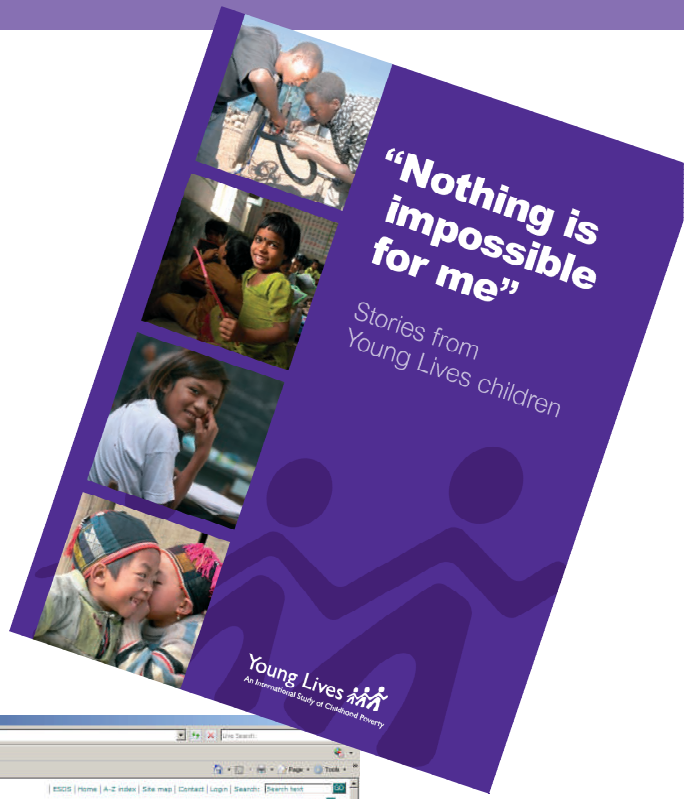
TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

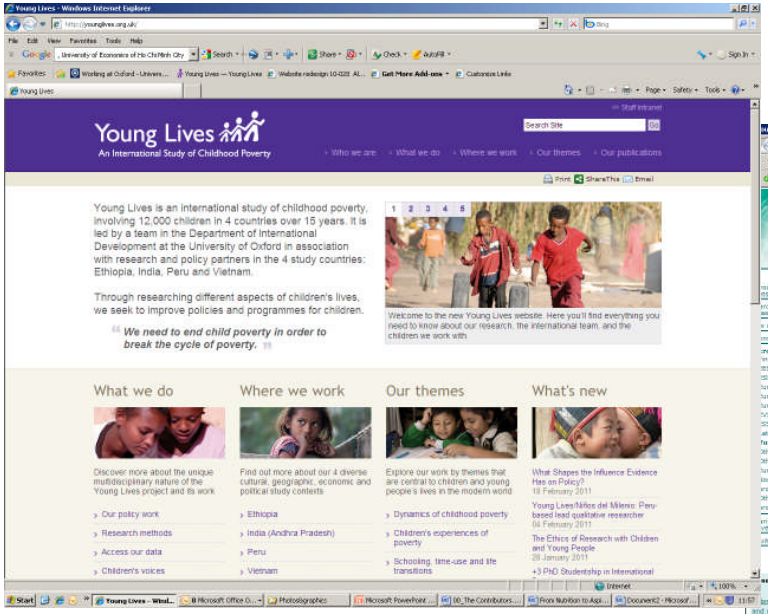
- Home background effects on progress in G5 are not found in maths, indicating an *equitable* system (most maths is learned at school)
- Effects are found in Vietnamese, linked to ethnicity, speaking Vietnamese at home etc. (much Vietnamese is learned outside school)
- But weaker pupils initially benefit from general 'catch-up' in both subjects, regardless of their backgrounds, so that the achievement gap between high and low performers narrows overall
- Progress levels vary widely by class, but classes containing the most advantaged pupils are not those with the highest 'value-added'.
- These classes more often have specialist teachers and more stressed (harder working?) pupils
- In maths, the classes with the highest value-added actually contain more ethnic minority pupils and pupils with disadvantaged home backgrounds
- Pupils in the classes with the highest value-added pay (slightly) lower fees than those in the classes with the lowest value-added
- Some evidence of an equalising system and catch-up by disadvantaged pupils of the operation of socialisation principles
- In support of this, we also found no systematic differences in teacher content and pedagogical knowledge by advantage-level of the class

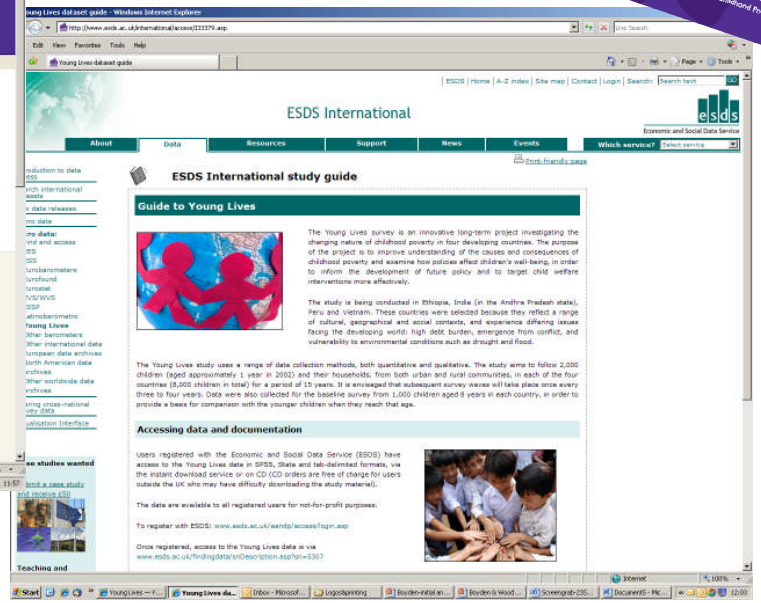
FINDING OUT MORE…

www.younglives.org.uk

- methodology and research papers
- datasets (ESDS International)
- publications
- child profiles and photos
- e-newsletter

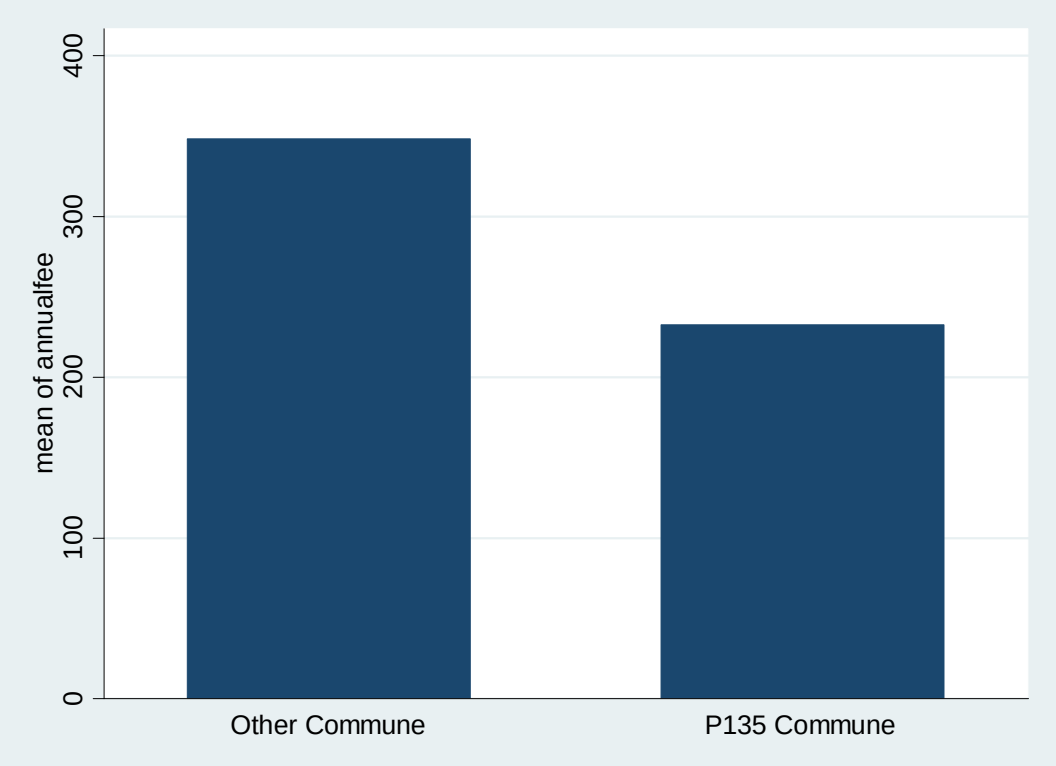




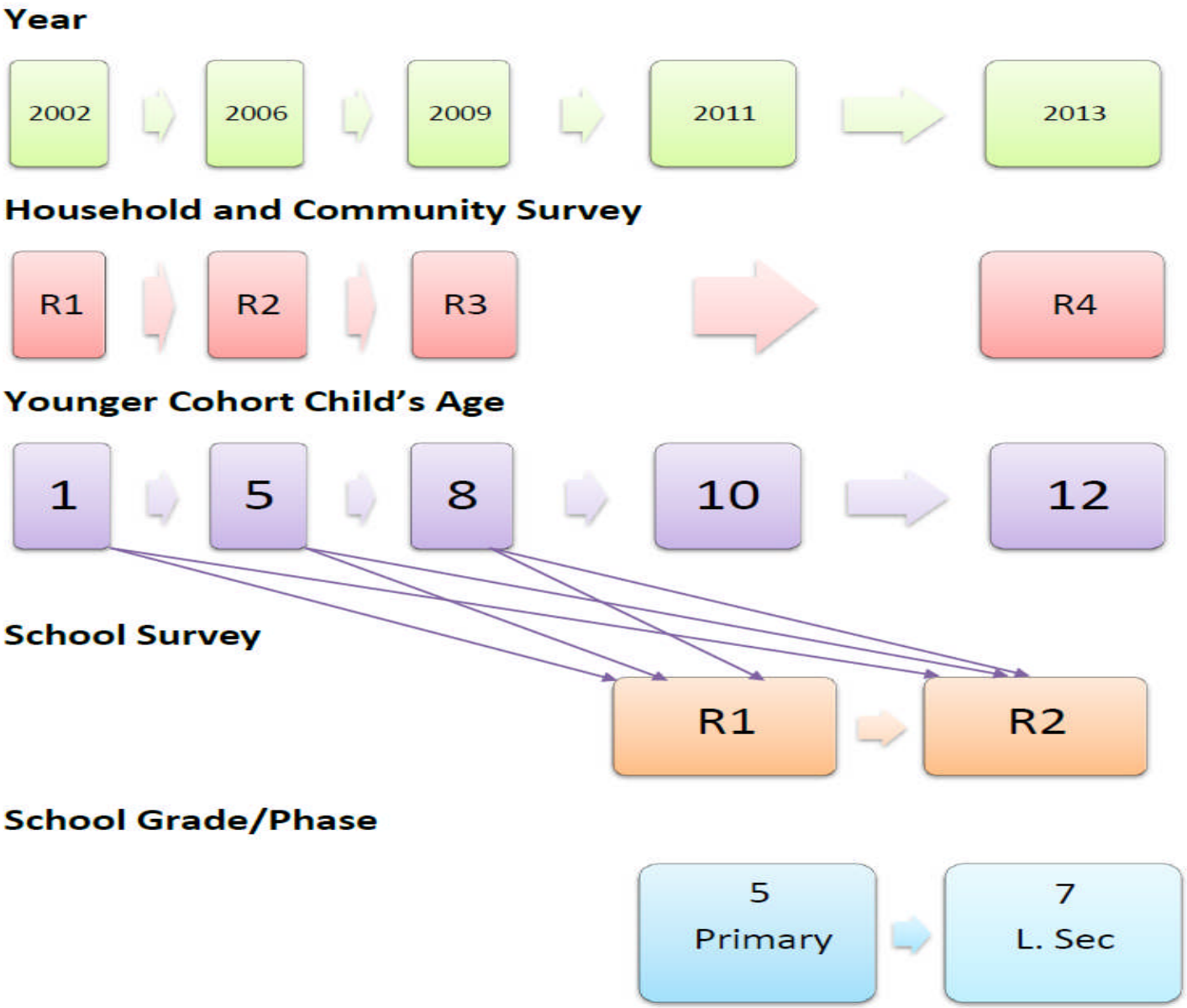


points

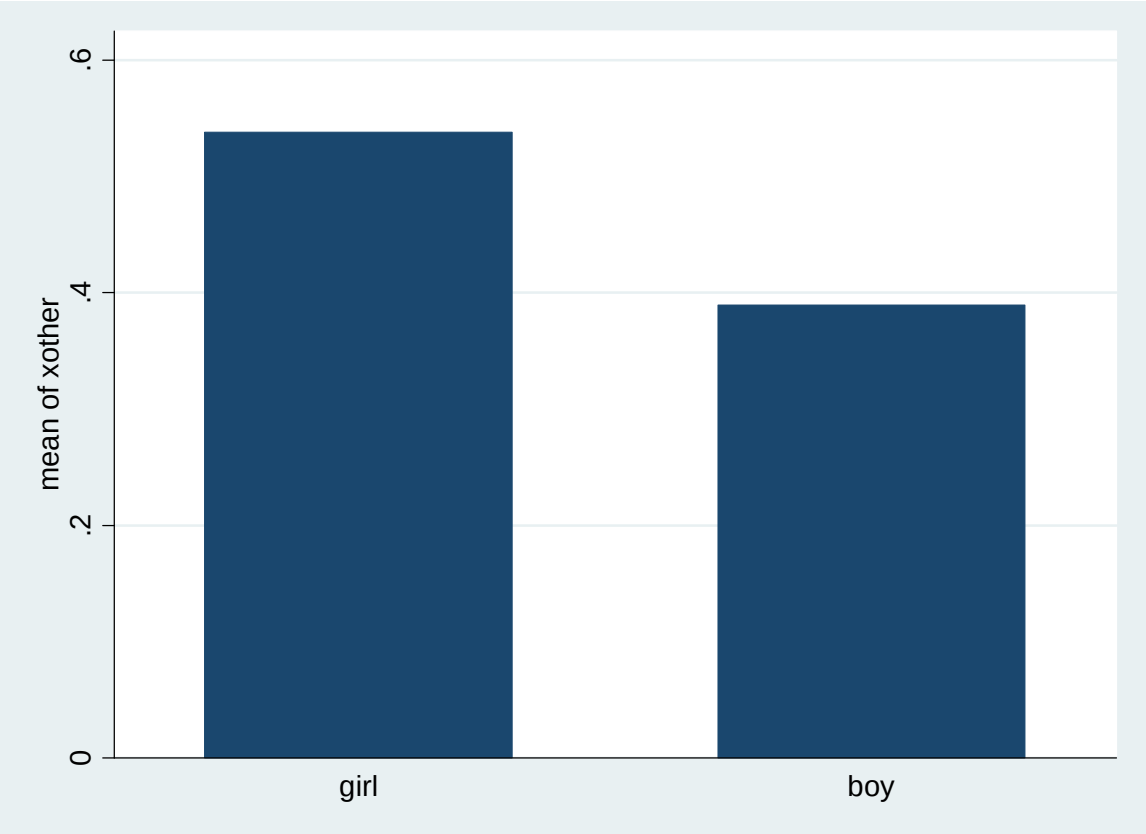
There is no difference between boys and girls maths scores at the end of Grade 5 but boys make more progress, starting from slightly lower initial scores



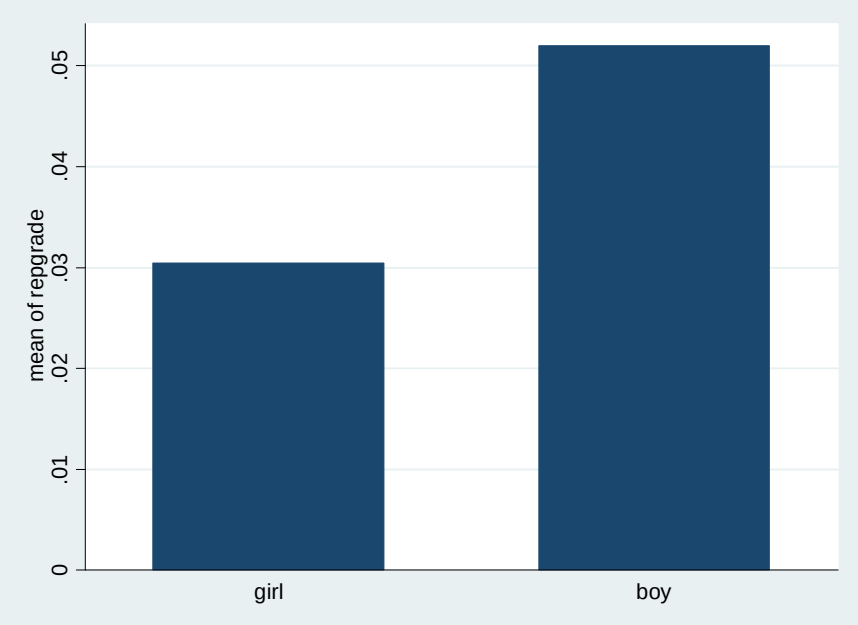
DATA STRUCTURE

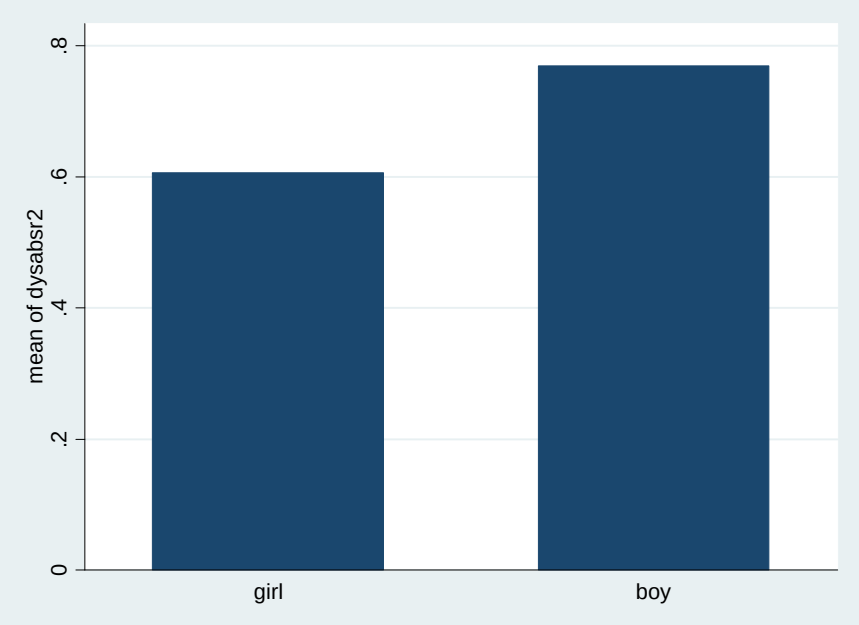


Girls attend more extra classes than boys (p<0.05) but not in maths or Vietnamese



Boys are more likely to repeat a grade and are absent for more days in the school year (p<0.05)





Girls report notably more school-related stress than boys (p<0.05)