

Post-secondary Education Enrolment: Evidence from the National Income Dynamic Study (NIDS)

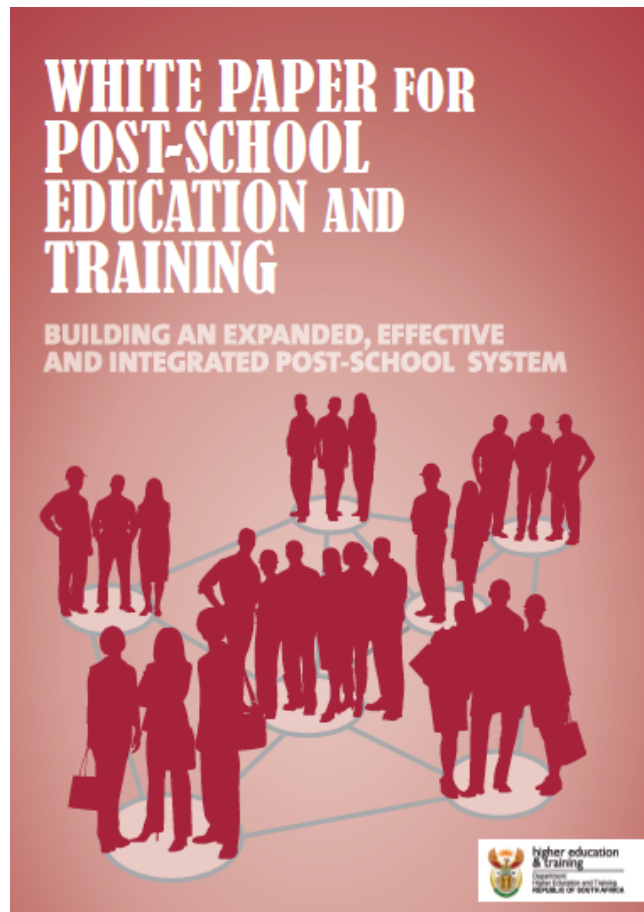
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Post-school enrolment: Cycle of inequality

- Low and unequal levels of post-secondary enrolment lead to skill shortages.
- Shortages result in high rewards for the skilled and in turn low rewards for the unskilled,
- Means the unskilled remain poor and, as a result, have limited access to post-secondary education.
- And so, the cycle continues.

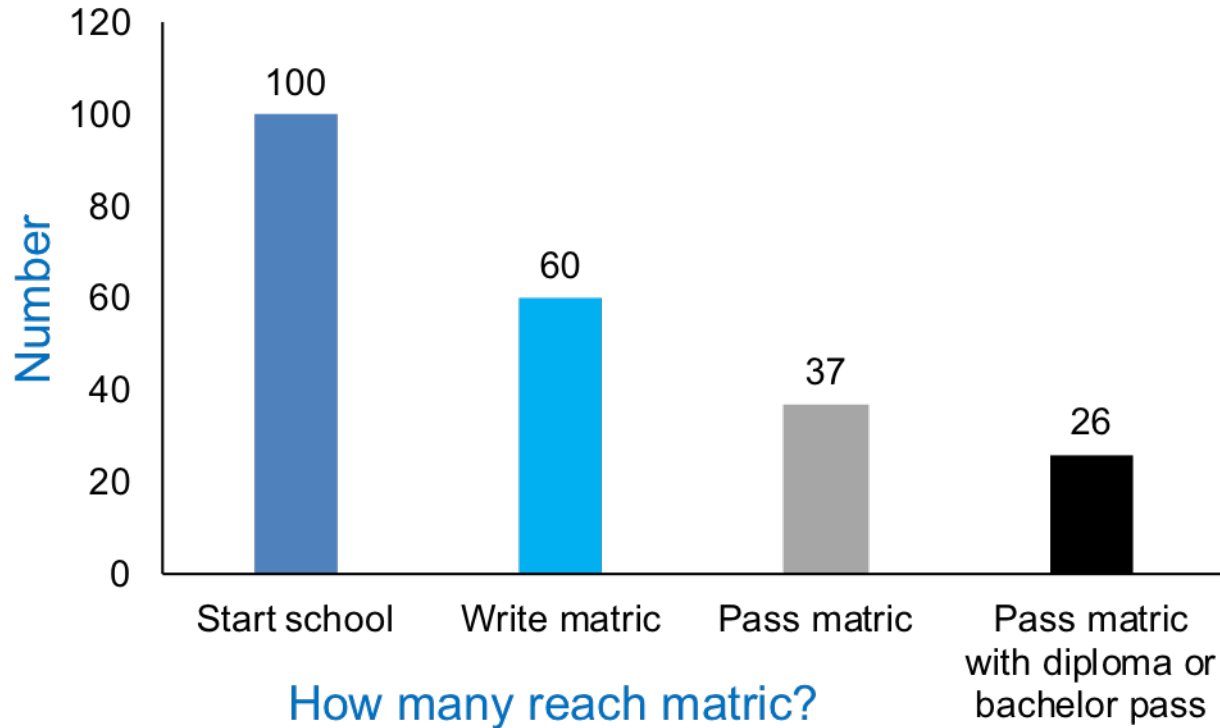
Policy



It is within this context that in 2013, the Department of Higher Education and Training presented a 20-year plan.

- This plan included increasing the number of Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges – TVETs; which focus on the development of vocational or mid-level skills.

Basic education system leaves many behind

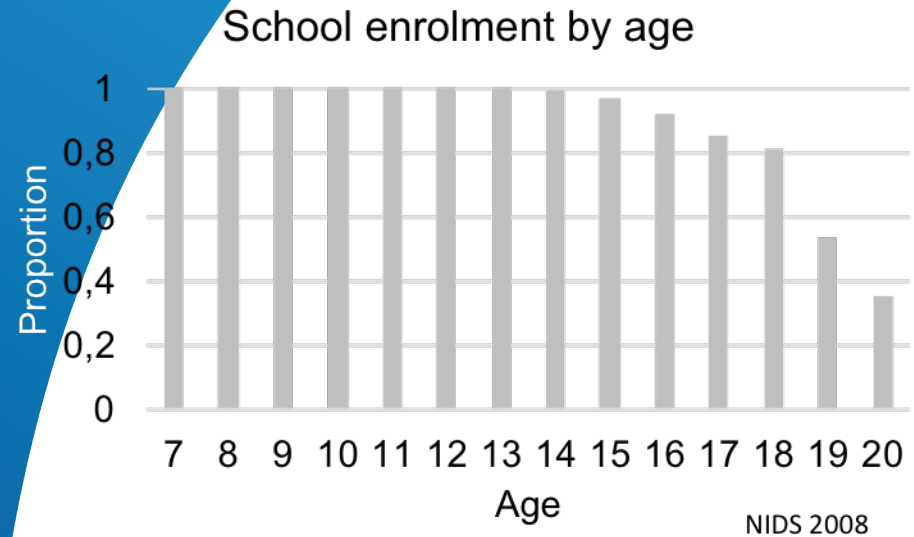


Source:

Van Broekhuizen, van der Berg & Hofmeyr (2016)

Not a lack of commitment

- Enrolment is high even post compulsory education
- Yet very few learners have smooth transitions through school, repetition is common
 - E.g. A third of male learners in grades 7, 8 and 9 will fail at least one grade over the next 4 years
 - Low socioeconomic learners are disproportionately affected
- Repeating is a strong predictor of dropping out of school



100% of age 7-14 are enrolled

>90% of age 15 and 16 are enrolled

>80% of age 17 and 18 are enrolled

TVET-University mismatch

- 63% of South Africans do not successfully complete secondary school (Grade 12)
 - Access to TVETs available to school leavers with a minimum schooling level of Grade 9
 - Yet, few learners use the TVET route as an alternative to matric and
 - Only 26% of post-secondary enrollees are enrolled at TVETs.

TVET vs University enrolment

- Has been an increase in the proportion of school-leavers enrolling at TVETs
 - Shift **away** from universities and private institutions towards TVETs, rather than an absolute increase?
- To increase post-secondary enrolment levels overall will need
 - Attention on those currently **not** participating in **any** post-secondary education.
 - And completion rates at institutions...

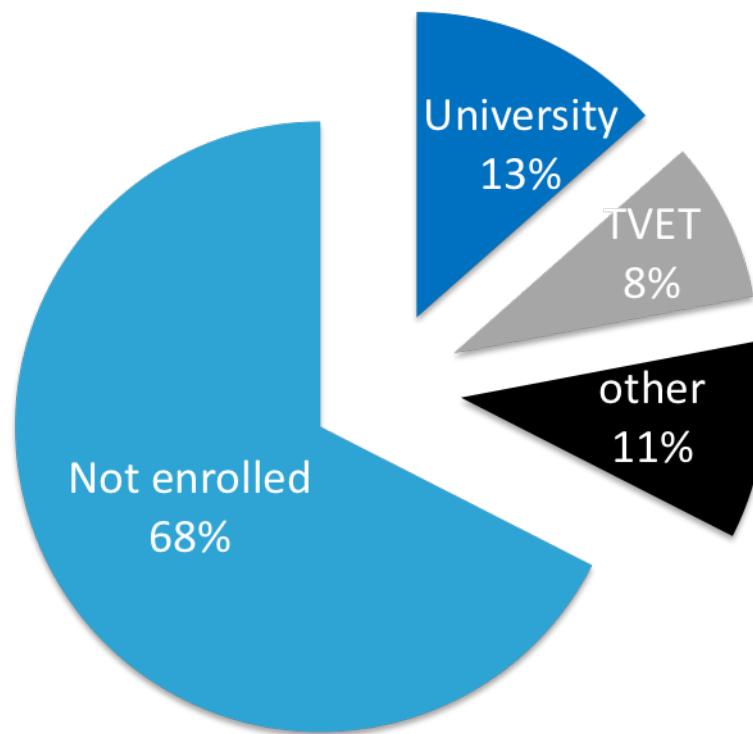
Research question

To what extent is entry into post-secondary education dependent on:

- Socio-economic status
- Financial means, and
- Academic merit?

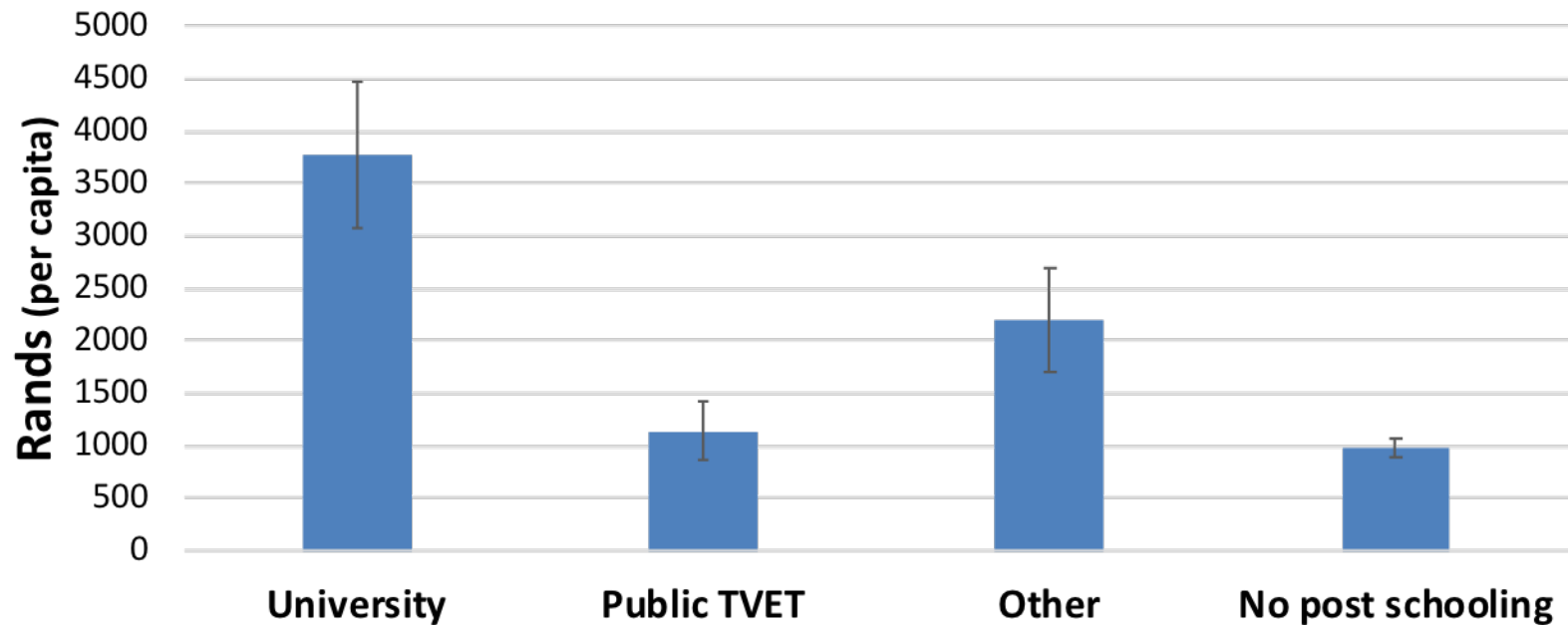
Post-secondary enrolment

NIDS waves 1-4:
- In Matric 2008
-2014
- Seen again
within 2 years



Enrolment status within 2 years of grade 12

Household income in matric by post-schooling enrolment

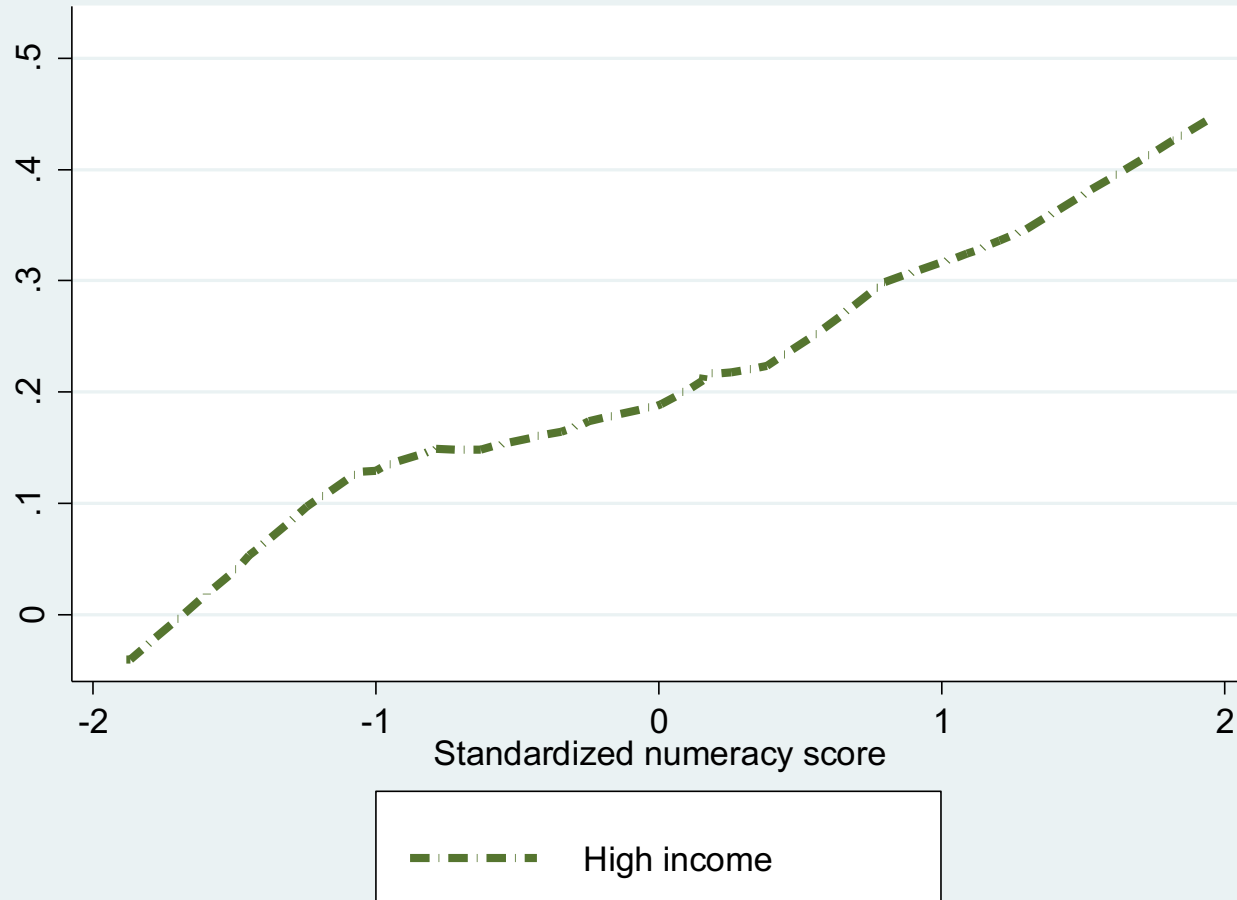


- University enrolees come from the wealthiest households
- TVET enrolees come from households of similar income levels to those who do not enrol in post schooling

But how much of these differences are due to academic eligibility?

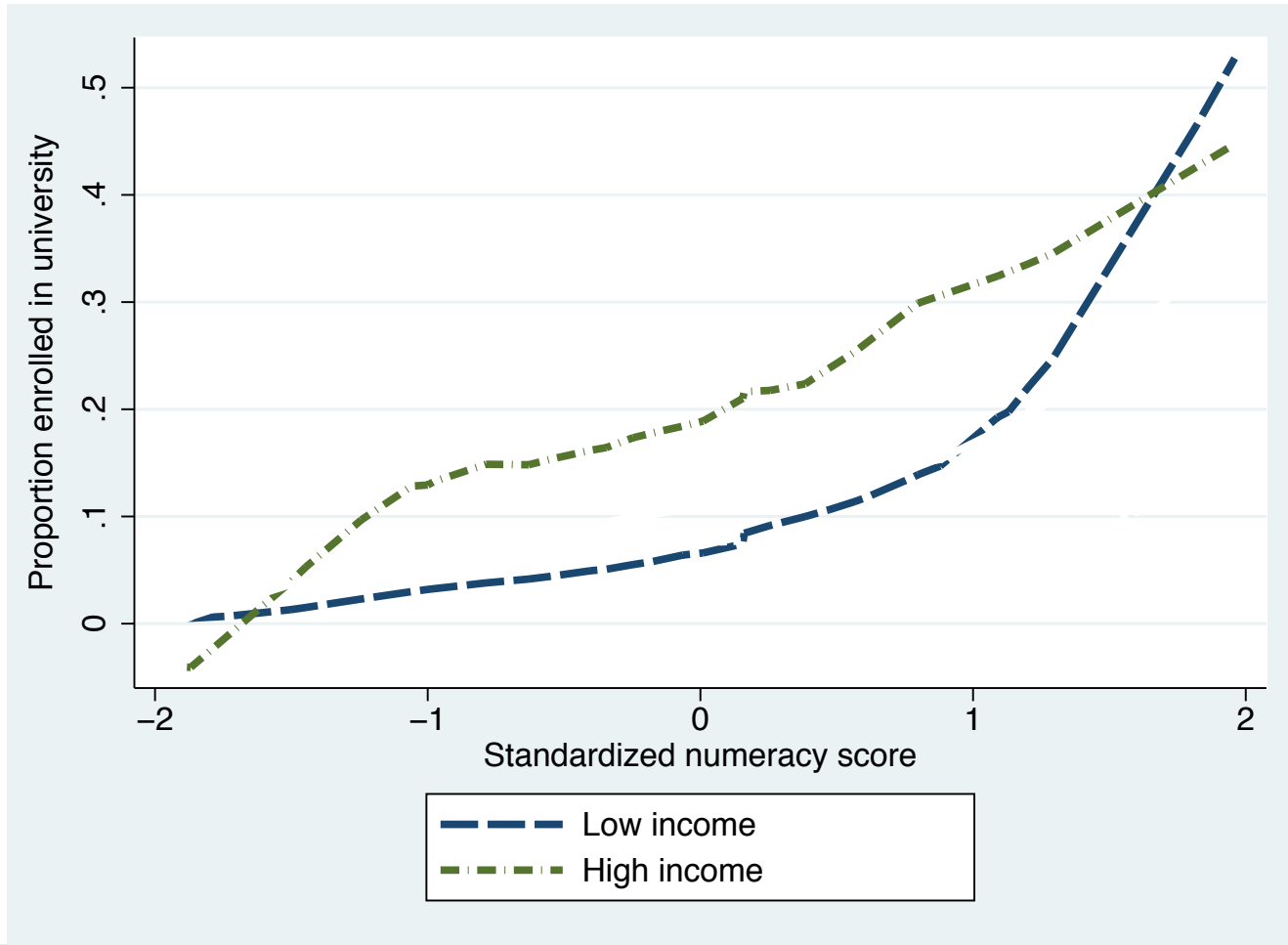
University enrolment increases with numeracy scores for the high income

Proportion enrolling in University within 2 years



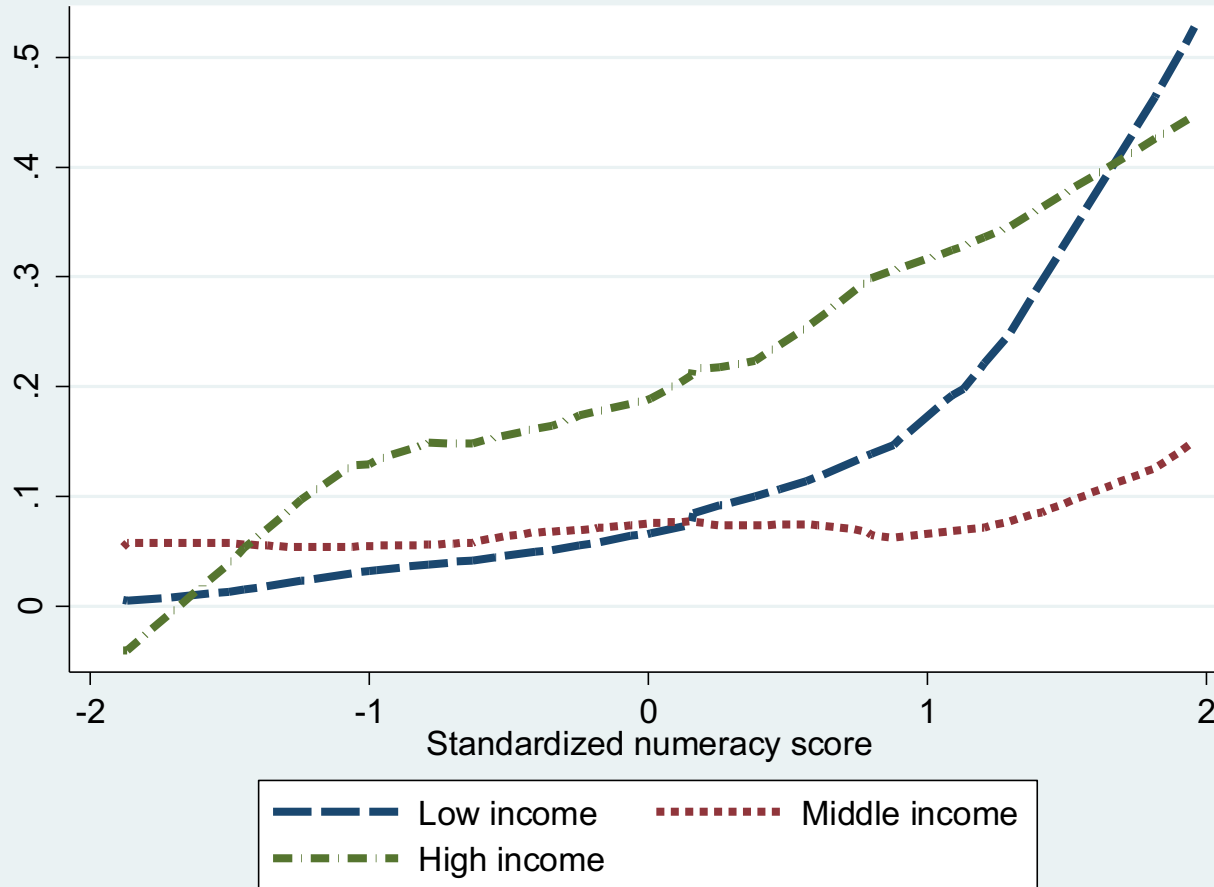
And low income

Proportion enrolling in
University within 2 years



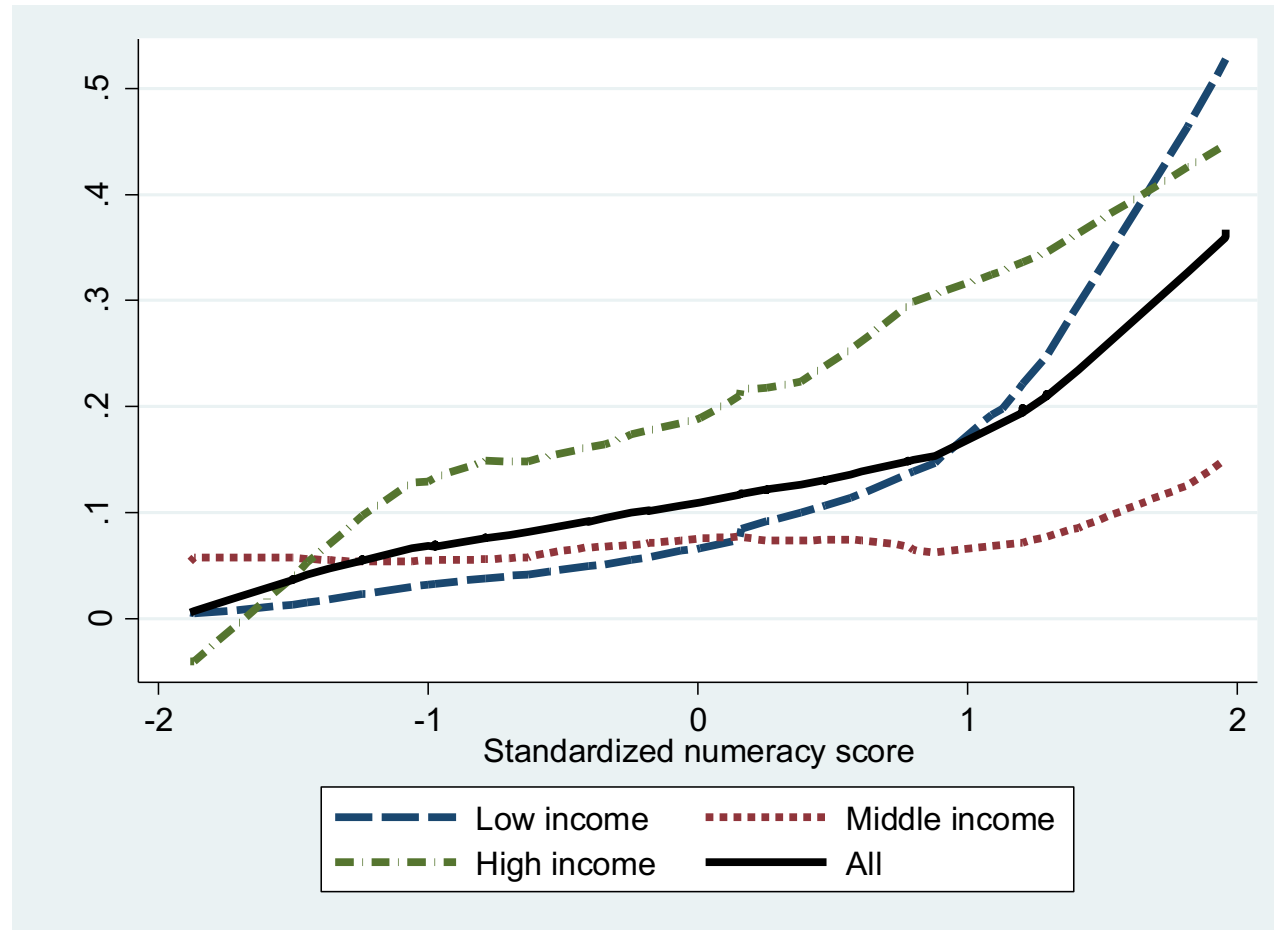
But not for those in the middle

Proportion enrolling in
University within 2 years



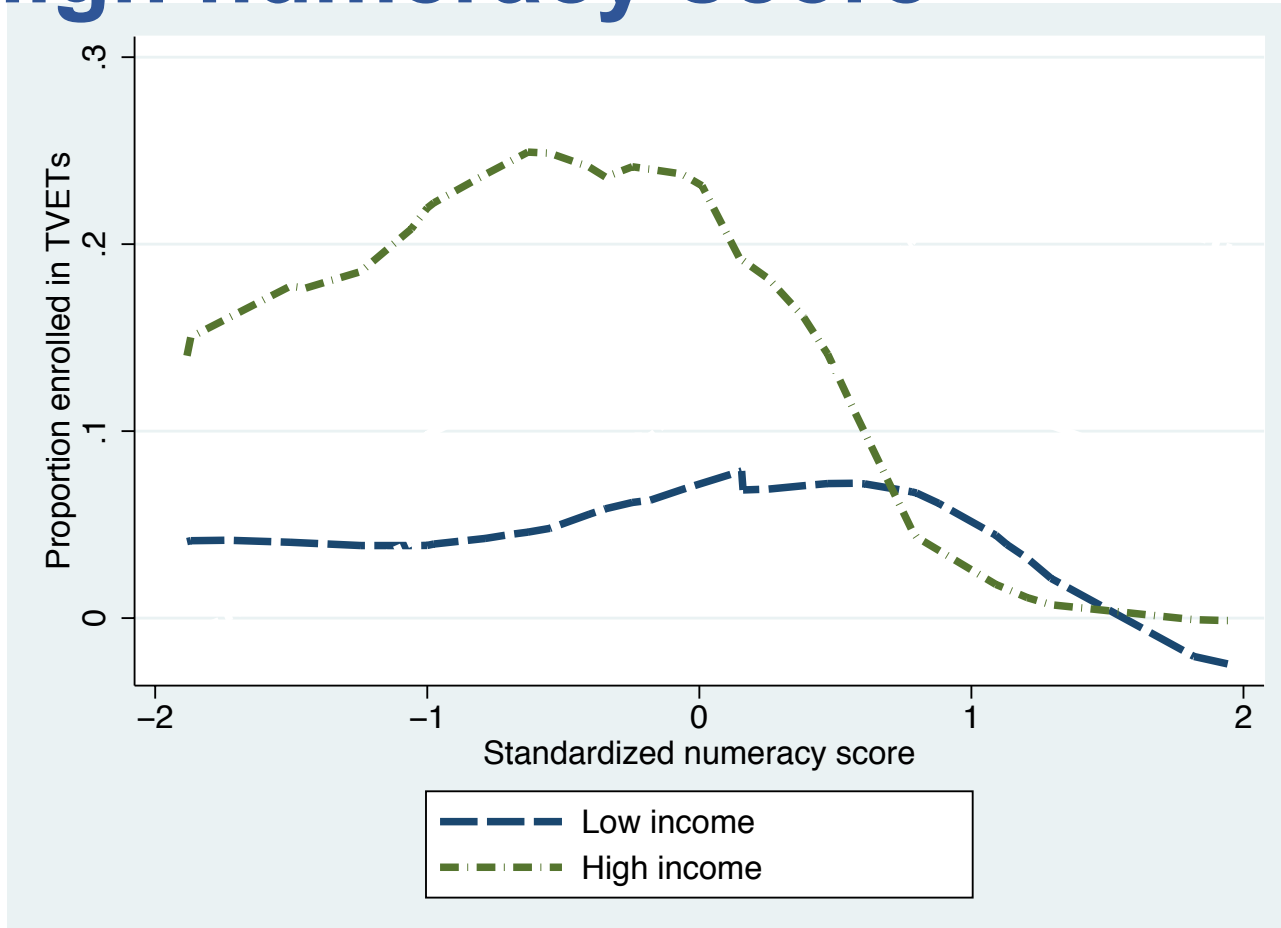
University enrolment by numeracy score and income

Proportion enrolling in University within 2 years



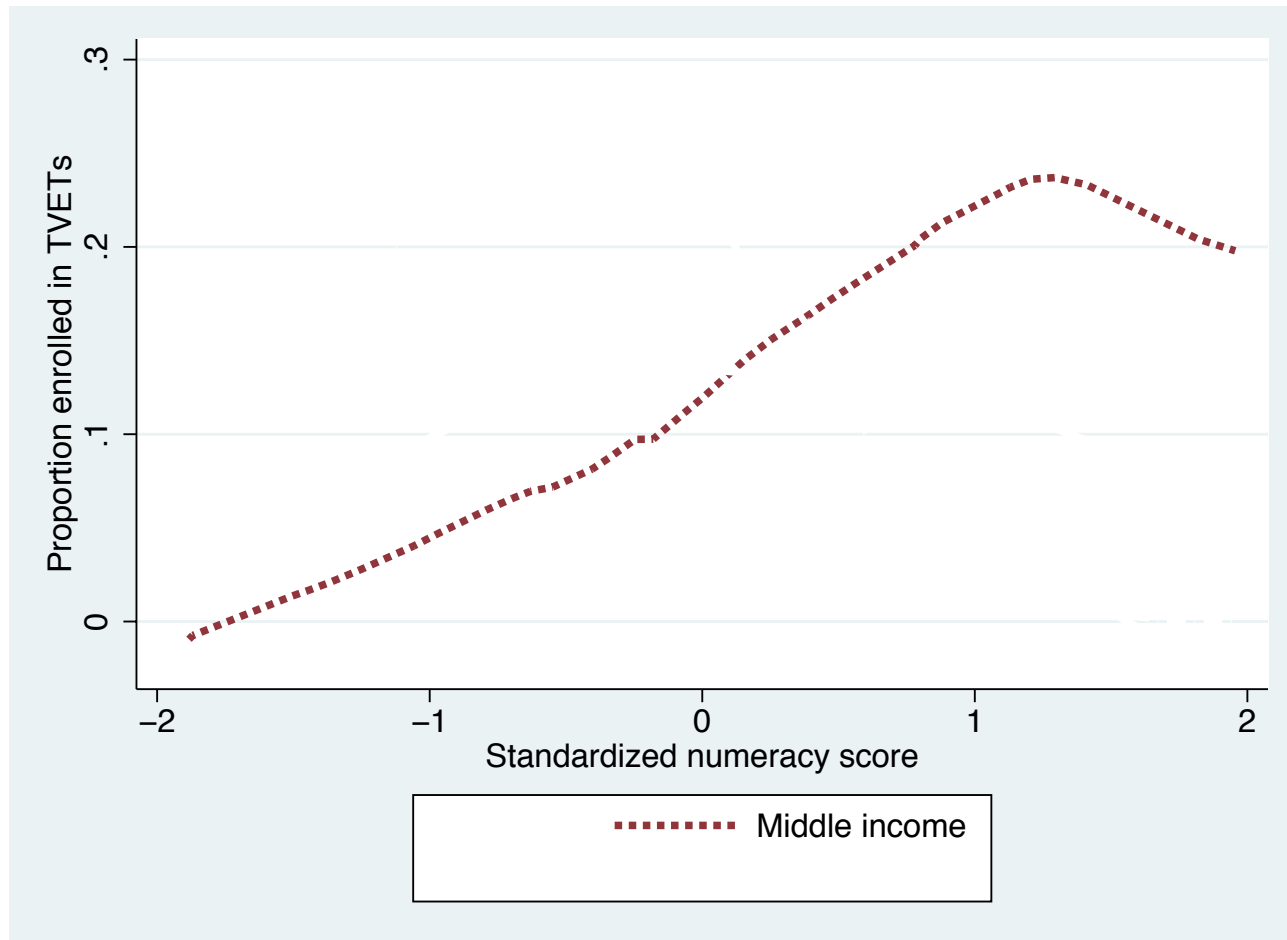
TVET enrolment drops to almost zero for high and low income individuals with high numeracy score

Proportion enrolling in TVET within 2 years



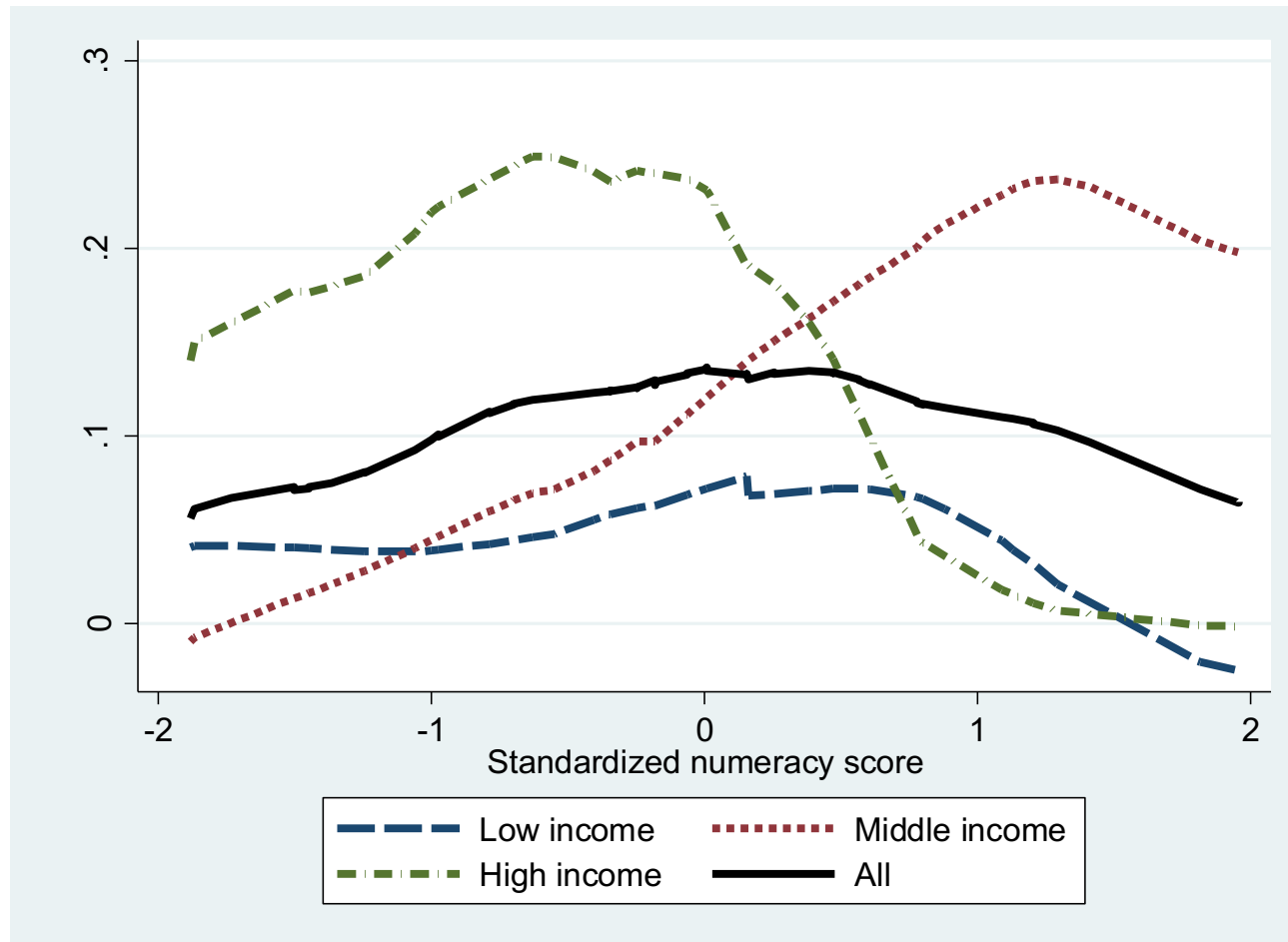
But TVET enrolment increases by numeracy score for middle income

Proportion enrolling in TVET within 2 years



TVET enrolment by numeracy score and income

Proportion enrolling in TVET within 2 years



A possible explanation



What about those who do not enrol? How do they compare to TVET enrolees?



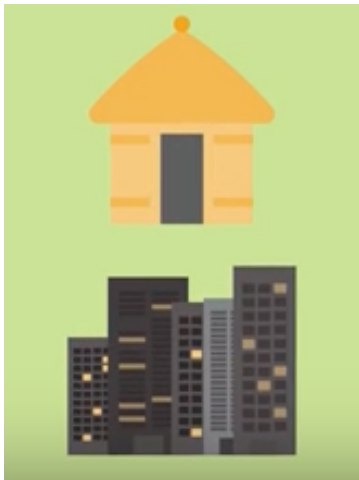
Similarities



School Characteristics



Household Size



Location



Reliance on grants

17, 18, 19, 20...

Age in matric

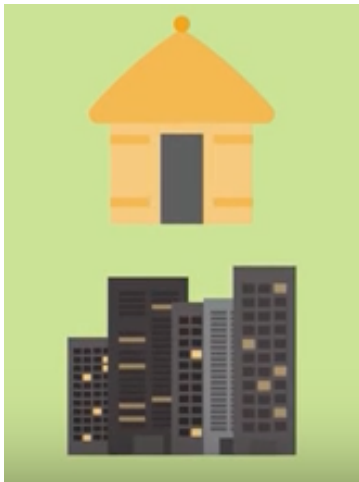
Similarities



School Characteristics



Household Size



Location



Reliance on grants

And age in matric

Differences

- More educated parents
- Better test scores
- Marginally higher incomes in matric



Concluding questions

- How do we best support low and middle income school leavers with high scholastic ability, who want to enrol at TVETs or universities?
- Does the significant role of short-term credit constraints on TVET enrolment suggest that additional funding reforms are needed?
 - And will the recent free higher education reforms provide the solution?

Concluding questions

- How do we encourage school leavers with lower levels of scholastic ability, including those who do not get to grade 12, to enrol in some form of post-secondary education?

THANK YOU

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SALDRU

Southern Africa Labour and
Development Research Unit

**CHALLENGING INEQUALITIES THROUGH POLICY
RELEVANT ACADEMIC RESEARCH.**