

Free Primary Education in Kenya: Quality, Transitions, and New Stratifications

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Primary Schools in Nairobi City

	Registration	Land	Teachers	Instruct. materials grant	KCPE
Public schools	MOEC	Publicly owned	Trained	Yes	Yes
Private schools	MOEC	Proprietor-owned	Trained	No	Yes
'Non-formal' schools	Min Gender and Social Services	Leased	Some trained (c 50%)	Minority (c 20%)	Yes (since 2006)

Nairobi Primary Schools:

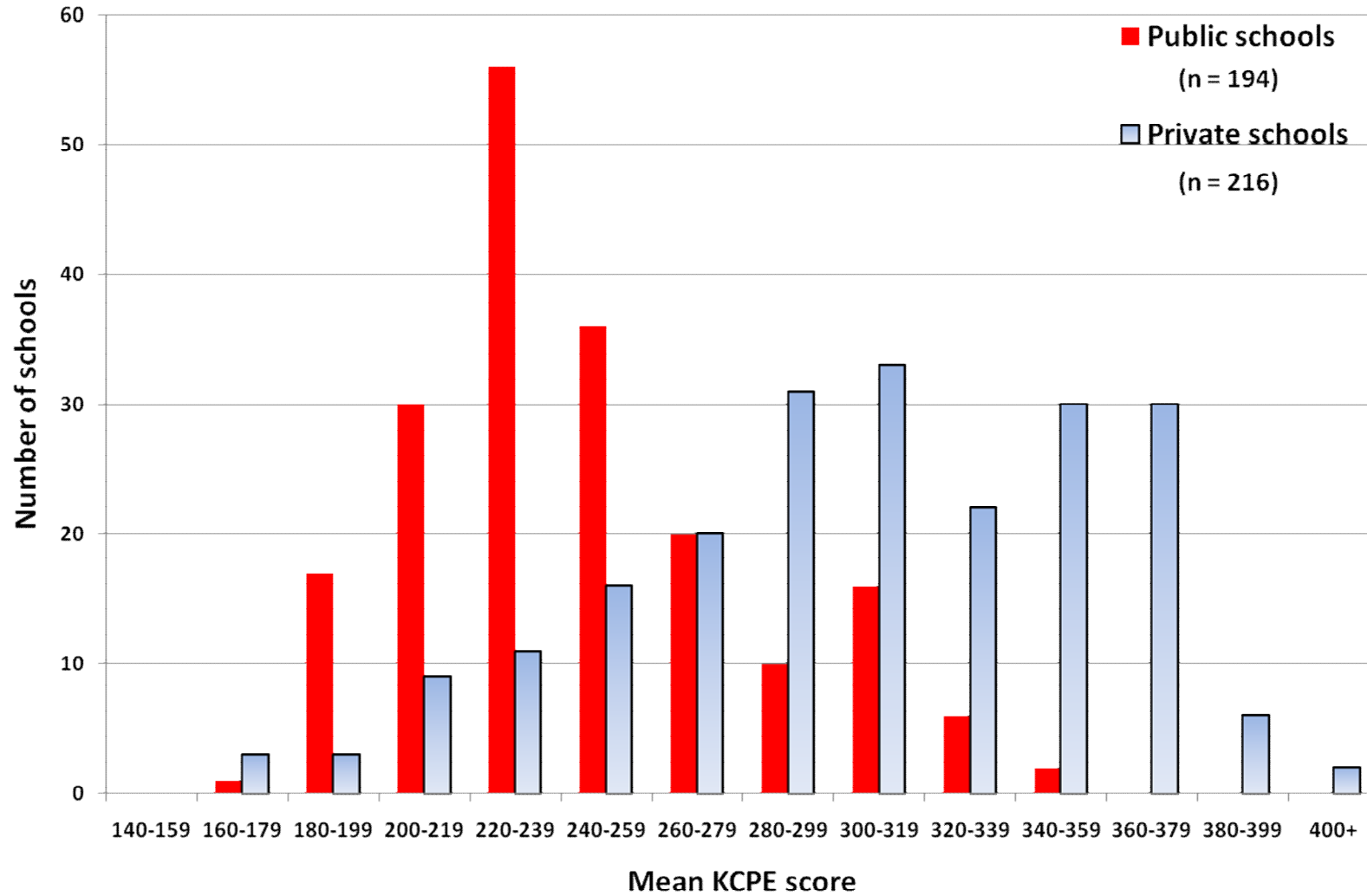
Mean scores, Kenya Primary Leaving (KCPE) Examination,
2007

National mean = 250

	Number of schools	Mean KCPE score	Candidates	Increase in candidature over 2006
Public schools	194	245.02	20,067	7.3%
Private schools	216	306.69	7,072	38.1%
'Non-formal' schools	132	252.29	6,032	54.1%

Performance Gap between Public and Private Primary Schools in Nairobi City:

Mean KCPE scores, 2007



Perceptions of Free Primary Education

Two transferees from public schools to a private school

We were so congested. . . You could not have time to ask questions. . There were few materials Desks were few and some were forced to sit on the floor. The teacher could not . . mark our books and so one could not know where he or she had gone wrong *(girl, 14)*

(When) the government introduced free education I was so happy . . . I did not know the disadvantages. We were so crowded one desk was sat in by seven pupils. The teacher used to come to teach but he did not mark. . . Teachers . . had no (choice). They had to do what the government had said. Free education has some advantages one is that at least somebody learns something up to class eight. It may allow those who are poor to make it. *(boy, 14)*

Perceptions of Free Primary Education

Proprietor of large private school (2008)

We thought that Free Primary Education (in 2003) would kill our business, but in fact it was our opportunity

Secondary school stratification:

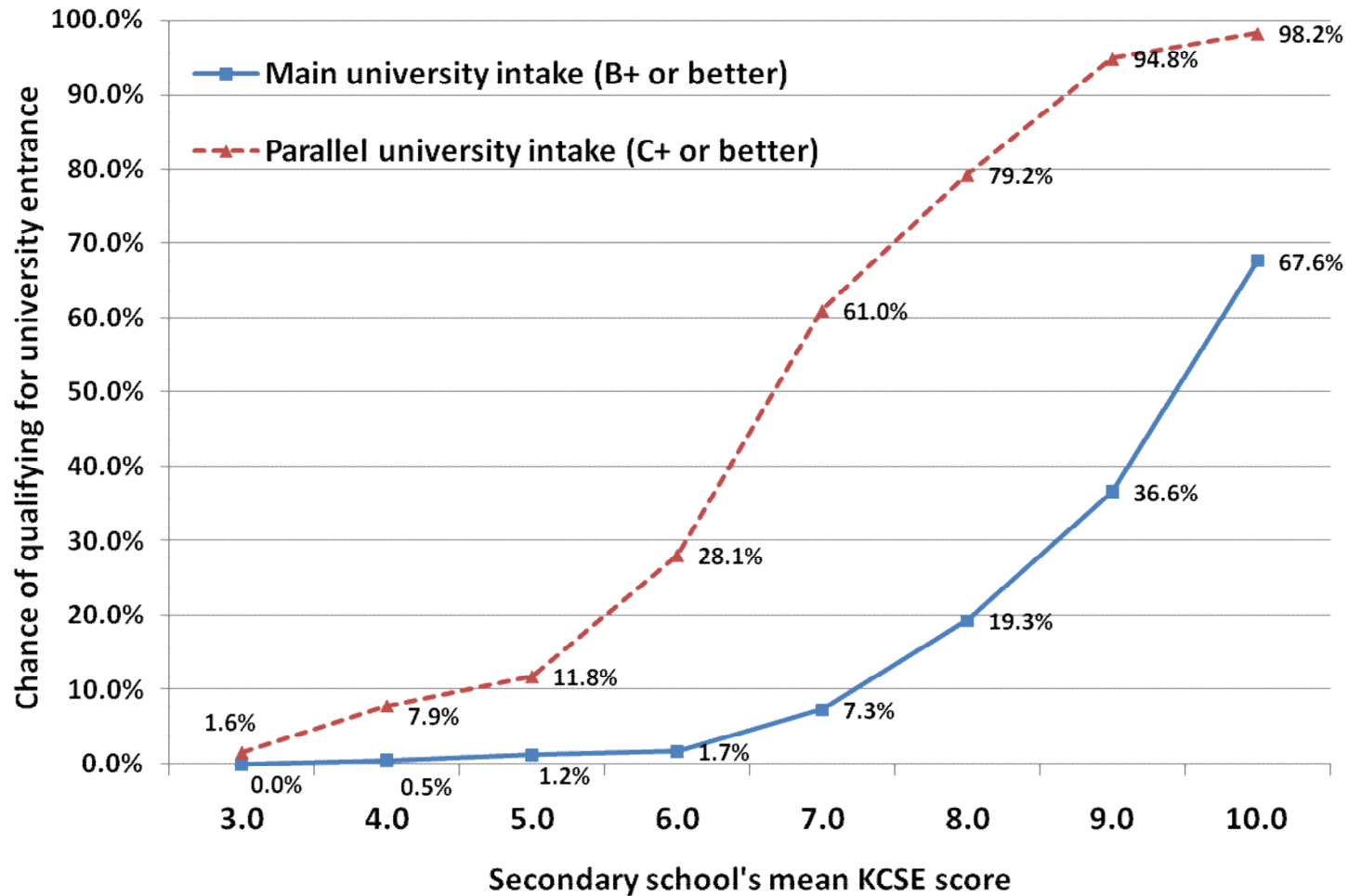
Types of school and mean KCSE scores

Central Province 2007

	Schools	Candidates	Mean KCSE score (A = 12; E = 1)	Grade equivalent (approx)
Public schools:				
National	7	1,164	9.99	B+
Provincial	111	13,712	6.66	C to C+
District	587	31,578	4.07	D+
Private schools	112	4,831	4.46	D+ to C-

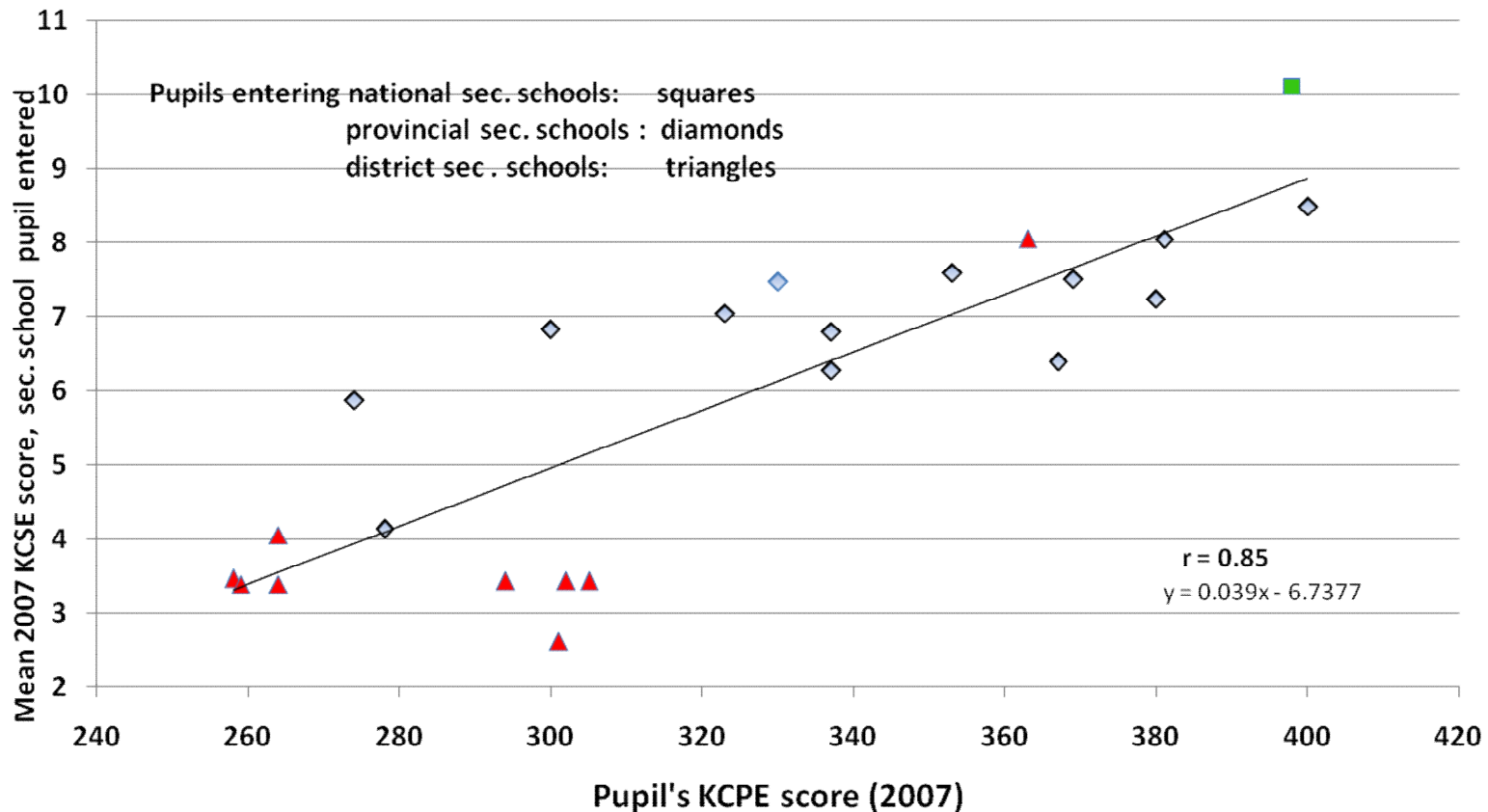
Effect of secondary school mean KCSE score on pupils' chance of qualifying for university entrance

Central province, 2007



The Transition to Secondary School (I): Primary leaver's KCPE score, compared with status of secondary school entered

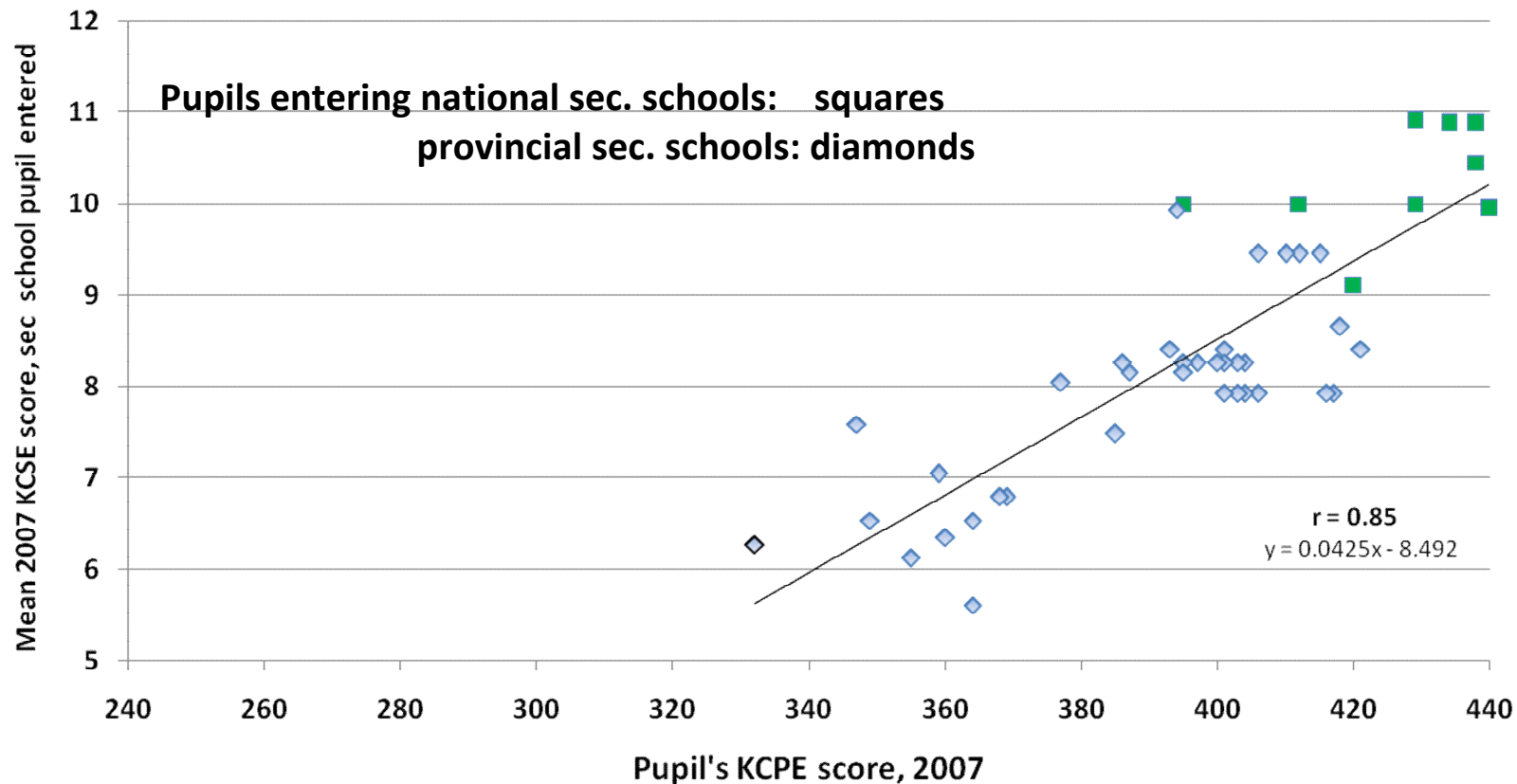
Kazi Primary School, Public, Nyeri Urban



The single pupil at Kazi school who won a place at a national secondary school was the only pupil to do so among the 229 pupils at the 7 public primary schools surveyed

The Transition to Secondary School (II): Primary leaver's KCPE score, compared with status of secondary school entered

Highrise Primary School. Private, Nairobi environs

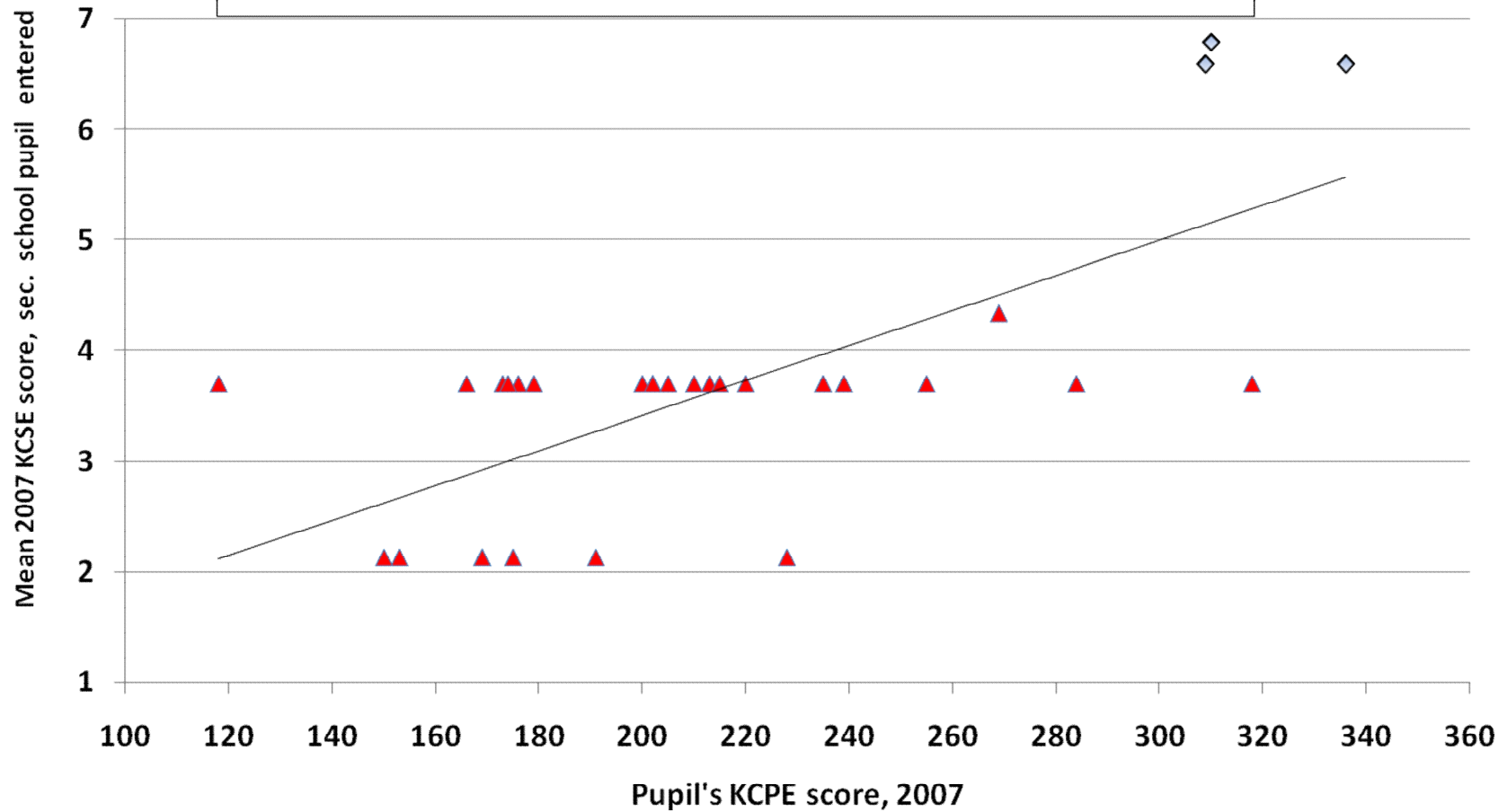


All leavers from this proprietor-owned private primary school entered *government* secondary schools. Nine entered national schools; none a district school.

The Transition to Secondary School (III):

Primary leaver's KCPE score, compared with performance status of secondary school entered

Mugunda Primary school, Public, Nyeri Rural



Protecting access pathways for public primary-school leavers

Two alternative quota systems:

- 1. Set a maximum limit to the proportion of private-school leavers to be admitted to each national and provincial school during each annual selection round.**
- 2. Set a minimum limit to the proportion of leavers from each public primary school admitted to the higher-status secondary schools.**