

Children who enter school not ready to learn because of immaturity have difficulties later in their school life. This study set out to investigate the factors that underlie cognitive maturity and as well as its reliable and valid assessment using analogical thinking tasks and human figure drawings. Using Multi-stage sampling, 96 children were selected for the study and data was collected during the third term of the last year of pre-school. While significant differences in cognitive maturity were found on account of differences in age, SES and teaching methods, none were found as a result of differences in gender. Using known groups of maturity, t-tests revealed that mature children differed significantly from the immature children in both the DAP and the CATM tests. Further evidence of validity was provided by the significant correlation coefficients obtained by the Cronbach-alfa for the DAP and CMB scores ( $0.53 < r < 0.61$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and by the Kuder Richardson (KR-20) formula for the CATM and CMB scores ( $0.2 < r < 0.4$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) Inter-item correlation coefficients were also significant for the DAP ( $0.85 < r < 0.95$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and the CATM ( $0.2 < r < 0.6$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) tests, suggesting that both tests are reliable for use among Kenyan children. The study therefore recommended that drawings and analogical tasks be included in the assessment for readiness, that preschool teachers avoid the use of teacher centred methods as they do not lead to an improvement in cognitive maturity and also that there is need for policies to target children from the low SES groups in order to provide stimulating environments that will nurture their cognitive development. The study also recommended further research in the development of tests for measuring all aspects of a child's readiness