

21st Century Skills and the Community Engagement of Grade 6 Learners

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Abstract. This study assessed the levels of 21st-century skills, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, among Grade 6 learners, along with their community engagement in San Fernando II District, Bukidnon. “Using a descriptive–correlational research design, data were gathered through a standardized questionnaire adapted from previous studies, with responses measured using a five-point Likert scale. The sample comprised 188 Grade 6 learners, selected at random. Analysis involved computing means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations to determine skill and engagement levels and to explore their interrelationships. Findings revealed that learners demonstrated high levels in all assessed 21st-century skills and a very high degree of community engagement. Significant and strong positive correlations were observed between each skill and community engagement, both individually and collectively, indicating the integral role of these competencies in fostering learners’ active participation in community life. The study concluded that Grade 6 learners possess essential competencies that support effective problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and innovation, reflected in their advanced community involvement characterized by responsibility, empathy, and social advocacy. The significant associations underscore the importance of 21st-century skills in preparing learners to be active, engaged citizens. Recommendations highlight the need for learners to continually develop these skills through interactive and problem-based learning connected to real-world and community contexts. The integration of 21st-century skills and community engagement explicitly within curriculum frameworks, supported by professional development, is important. Future research is encouraged to identify instructional strategies and community-based programs that best enhance the collaboration between these skills and community involvement across diverse educational settings and grade levels.

Introduction

Integrating 21st-century skills into education presents several significant challenges. Policymakers reference skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and digital literacy in curricula, yet schools often struggle to translate these into effective classroom strategies. Many teachers lack adequate preparation and receive insufficient professional development, which impedes the incorporation of these skills into daily instruction. The digital divide further intensifies educational inequality, as unequal access to technology and online learning tools restricts students from developing digital and information literacy. Education systems also often fail to provide clear frameworks or consistent definitions of 21st-century skills, complicating educators’ design, implementation, and assessment of these competencies across diverse learning environments (Boholano, 2021).

Moreover, community engagement among learners is hindered by several factors that restrict participation in community and political activities. A notable barrier is the lack of awareness and interest, often resulting from limited exposure to social studies education. Additionally, students frequently encounter a scarcity of opportunities for involvement in activities such as volunteering and advocacy. The proliferation of misinformation through social media can further contribute to disengagement or misguided actions. Academic pressures also constrain the time available for community

involvement, and the absence of mentors diminishes motivation. Importantly, Levinson (2020) highlighted that access to community education and real-world participation opportunities significantly influences learner engagement. The study underscores the critical role of schools in fostering community involvement and notes that learners from marginalized backgrounds encounter greater obstacles due to limited resources.

In this context, schools serve as the primary environment for equipping learners with the skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. To meet the growing demands of modern society, learners must acquire competencies that extend beyond traditional academic subjects and career preparation. The core competencies of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, commonly referred to as the Four Cs of 21st-century learning, have been established by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills as essential elements of modern education (Kalyani, 2024).

However, despite their recognized importance, research reveals persistent gaps in the development of these skills, which impede learners' capacity for active community participation. Gray (2025) identified a disconnect between the competencies students acquire in school and those necessary for effective community engagement and societal contribution. Specifically, Grade 6 learners require opportunities to apply critical thinking to community issues, to utilize communication skills to articulate ideas, to engage in collaborative decision-making, and to demonstrate creativity in addressing local challenges. Enhancing these 21st-century skills not only supports academic achievement but also empowers learners to become active, responsible, and engaged citizens.

Given these ongoing challenges, the educational system must evolve to prepare learners for life beyond the classroom adequately. Success in the global environment requires the development of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, collectively known as the Four Cs. Teachers expect to integrate these skills across all subject areas to prepare students for both citizenship and participation in the global workforce. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2010) asserts that embedding the Four Cs into education is vital for maintaining global competitiveness. In an increasingly digital world, students require innovative skills and knowledge to succeed throughout their academic and professional lives. Facilitating the development of 21st-century skills is essential for learners' success in school, work, and broader society, ensuring adaptability and resilience in a rapidly changing world.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Building on this foundation, this study is anchored on inquiry-based learning theory, as proposed by Kuhlthau, Maniotes, and Caspari (2012), as well as Edelson, Gordin, and Pea (1999). Inquiry-based learning provides a framework for designing educational experiences that prepare learners for real-world challenges, including the workplace, community engagement, and lifelong learning. This theory emphasizes the development of essential inquiry skills, such as posing and refining research questions, managing projects, and communicating results effectively. Additionally, it integrates content and process in learning activities, allowing students to engage in authentic, meaningful tasks that deepen their understanding of various subjects (Edelson, 2001).

A key model from this theory is the Partnership for 21st Century (P21) Learning Framework, which identifies the multidimensional skills learners need for success in modern society (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2011). This theory comprises two main components: 21st Century Student Outcomes and Learning Support Systems. The student outcomes focus on four areas: life and professional skills; learning and innovation skills; information, media, and technology skills; and key subjects (3Rs and 21st Century Themes). Learning Support Systems encompass curriculum and instruction, standards and assessments, professional development, and learning environments to ensure students acquire the necessary skills for the future (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2011).

The framework emphasizes the "4Cs" model: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Communication requires digital, interpersonal, written, and oral skills, while collaboration emphasizes teamwork to achieve shared goals. Critical thinking empowers students to process and analyze information, apply reasoning, and generate sound decisions. Creativity demands generating new and valuable ideas while remaining open to diverse perspectives (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2011). Both academia and industry increasingly require these skills for success.

As a result, integrating the 4Cs into educational settings enhances student engagement and achievement in core subjects. When communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity are embedded into learning environments, they encourage content learning and better prepare students for future challenges (National Education Association, 2014). The 4Cs also provide a pathway to transform traditional classroom models into innovative 21st-century learning environments that are lifelong learning and promote adaptability (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2011).

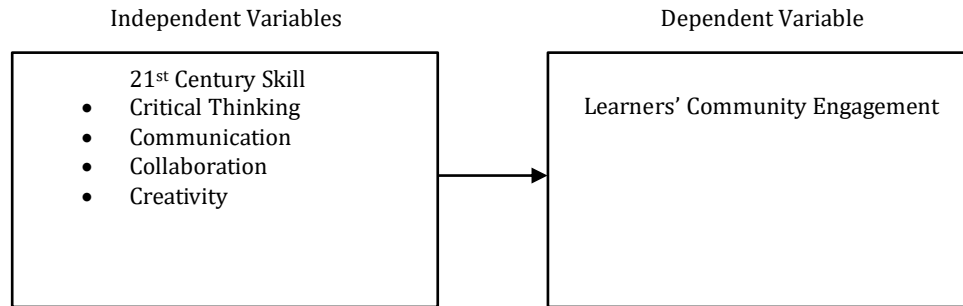


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the study showing the relationship of the independent and dependent variables of the study

Methodology

This chapter recapitulates the research methodology, including the research design, locale, sampling procedure, respondents, research instrument, data collection procedures, and statistical tools.

The Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, commonly used to describe variables and examine their relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Specifically, the researcher collected data via a survey to assess learners' 21st-century skills and their level of community engagement. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively to describe the extent of these skills and respondents' engagement. Following this, the study determines whether a significant relationship exists between learners' 21st-century skills and their community engagement through correlation analysis.

The Research Locale

The study took place in the San Fernando II District, within the Division of Bukidnon. San Fernando, Bukidnon, has a rich history rooted in its formation. It was originally part of the territories of Maramag and Malaybalay. However, significant changes occurred when, in accordance with Executive Order No. 347 issued by President Carlos P. Garcia on July 29, 1959, the barrios along the Tigwa River from Malaybalay and the barrios along the Salug River from Maramag were delineated to establish the Municipality of San Fernando. This transformative step was taken during the leadership of Governor Teodoro Oblad and Congressman Cesar Fortich. A proposal was submitted to the then-existing Congress, leading to the creation of this district as an independent municipality. On June 18, 1966, San Fernando officially became a municipality through Republic Act No. 4789, named in honor of Fernando Damasco, in recognition of the significant role played by Father Catalino Damasco in the region's development.

The first local government was established in Barangay Namnam, about 48 kilometers from Valencia City. San Fernando comprises 24 barangays, each divided into puroks, some of which have sitios. The municipality is predominantly mountainous, with the Pantaron Mountain Range forming its western border and the Aga Mountains contributing to its diverse geography. The Tigwa and Salug River valleys span the northern, central, and southern regions. The first local government administration was established in Barangay Namnam, located approximately 48 kilometers away from Valencia City. San Fernando is politically divided into 24 barangays, each further divided into puroks, some of which have sitios. The municipality's landscape is predominantly mountainous, with around eighty percent of its total area characterized by mountains and valleys. The Pantaron Mountain Range, part of the Central Cordillera of Mindanao, forms a natural border between San Fernando and the Davao provinces to the west. Additionally, the Aga Mountains, situated between Valencia City and Quezon, contribute to the region's geographical diversity. The Tigwa River valley spans the municipality's northern and central regions, while the Salug River valley extends through its southern portion.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the Grade 6 learners of San Fernando II District, Division of Bukidnon, for the School Year 2025-2026. These learners, typically aged 11 to 12, are at a crucial stage of their educational journey as they transition to secondary education. At this level, they are expected to demonstrate foundational 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, which are essential for active community engagement. Selecting Grade 6 learners as respondents is appropriate because their cognitive and social development allows them to participate

in discussions on community responsibilities and community involvement. Moreover, as they prepare for higher education, understanding the relationship between their 21st-century skills and community engagement can yield valuable insight.

Schools	N	n
Kalagangan Central Elementary School	70	33
Bugca Elementary School	42	20
Matupe Integrate School	51	24
Mahayag Elementary School	46	22
Cayaga Elementary School	33	15
Iglugsad Element School	37	17
Palapacan Element School	41	19
Kibongkong Integrated School	44	21
Panayaban Elementary School	37	17
Total	401	188

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by School

Sampling Procedure

This study employed a simple random sampling design to ensure that each Grade 6 learner in the San Fernando II District had an equal chance of being identified for the representative sample. Using the Raosoft sample size calculator, 188 respondents were selected from the 401 Grade 6 learners in the district. This sampling method enhances the generalizability of the findings while minimizing selection bias. The random selection was conducted across the aggregated elementary schools in San Fernando II District, ensuring a diverse representation of learners with varying levels of 21st-century skills and community engagement.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire for this study was divided into two parts. Part I was adapted from the standardized questionnaire developed by Varona (2020), which assesses 21st-century skills across four key areas: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Part II was adapted from the instrument designed by Doolittle and Faul (2013) to measure learners' community engagement. The questionnaire included closed-ended statements that learners responded to on a 5-point Likert scale, enabling a structured, quantifiable assessment of their skills and engagement. To ensure reliability, both instruments have been previously validated in academic research.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained formal permission from the Schools Division Superintendent, the District Supervisor, and the School Heads to conduct the study. After approval, the researcher coordinated with school principals to distribute the questionnaires, with Grade 6 advisers assisting in administration. Collected responses were retrieved, coded, recorded, and organized for statistical analysis. The results were then analyzed and interpreted to provide insights into the relationship between 21st-century skills and community engagement. Learners' 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, are based on how frequently they demonstrate these competencies.

Scoring Procedure

The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale to assess learners' 21st-century skills, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity based on how frequently they demonstrate these competencies.

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1.00 – 1.80	Never	Very Low

For community engagement, the same scale was used to measure learners' participation in community activities, awareness of social issues, and sense of responsibility toward community duties.

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always	Very Highly Engaged
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often	Highly Engaged
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes	Moderately Engaged
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely	Slightly Engaged
1	1.00 – 1.80	Never	Not engaged at all

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools were used to analyze the data gathered as answers to the problems stated in Chapter 1. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of 21st-century skills among Grade 6 learners, specifically in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Likewise, the mean and standard deviation will measure the level of learners' community engagement. To examine the relationship between 21st-century skills and community engagement, the study utilized the Pearson product-moment correlation.

Ethical Consideration

To ensure the ethical conduct of this study, all necessary precautions were taken to uphold the rights and welfare of the participants. Informed consents were secured from all people involved, including teachers, students, and school administrators, after they were thoroughly informed about the study's detailed purpose, objectives, and procedures. Participation was voluntary, and parties retained the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. The confidentiality and privacy of parties were protected by using secure data storage methods and anonymizing data during analysis. Before data collection, ethical clearance was acquired from the appropriate review board, and formal permissions were requested from school administrators and district officials.

Results and Discussion

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets data gathered from the respondents. The presentation order is based on the order of the specific problems in the statement of the problem.

It covers the level of 21st-century skills among Grade 6 learners in terms of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, and the level of community engagement among Grade 6 learners. It also examines the significant relationship between 21st-century skills and community engagement among Grade 6 learners.

Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 are the 21st-century skills among Grade 6 learners in terms of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, respectively. Table 6 shows the level of community engagement among Grade 6 learners. Each table includes 10 indicators, with corresponding vernacular translations to help respondents understand each statement clearly. The indicators, means, standard deviations, and interpretations are presented in the table. Table 7 shows the significant relationship between the 21st-century skills and community engagement among Grade 6 learners. The variables, correlation coefficient, p-value, and corresponding interpretations are shown in the table.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I think independently.	4.37	0.871	Very High
I can understand the link / connection between ideas.	4.35	0.835	Very High
I put critical thinking skills to be used in aspects of everyday life.	4.22	1.199	Very High
I think of topic/issue in an objective way.	4.19	1.378	High
I try to look for solutions to problems.	4.16	0.934	High

I manifest in the skillful manipulation of my own ideas/interests.	4.12	0.963	High
I can compare ideas.	3.95	1.535	High
I evaluate generated information.	3.85	1.023	High
I can see the importance of ideas.	3.66	1.050	High
I develop my reasoning skills regularly.	3.51	1.199	High
Overall	4.04	0.629	High

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1:00 – 1:80	Never	Very Low

Table 2. 21st century skills among Grade 6 learners in terms of critical thinking

Table 2 shows that the level of 21st-century skills among Grade 6 learners, specifically in critical thinking, is generally high, with an overall mean of 4.04 (SD = 0.629), indicating that learners often demonstrate these skills. The indicator with the highest mean is "I think independently" (Mean = 4.37, SD = 0.871), which reveals that learners very frequently engage in independent thinking.

Other indicators also reflect a strong presence of critical thinking skills, albeit at a slightly lower level. For example, "I can understand the link/connection between ideas" (Mean = 4.35, SD = 0.835) and "I put critical thinking skills to be used in aspects of everyday life" (Mean = 4.22, SD = 1.199) are rated very high, indicating learners frequently make meaningful connections and apply critical thinking in daily situations.

Indicators such as "I think of topic/issue in an objective way" (Mean = 4.19, SD = 1.378), "I try to look for solutions to problems" (Mean = 4.16, SD = 0.934), and "I manifest in the skillful manipulation of my own ideas/interests" (Mean = 4.12, SD = 0.963) fall within the high rating, illustrating that learners often evaluate issues objectively, seek solutions, and express their ideas skillfully.

Lower in the scale but still rated high are indicators like "I can compare ideas" (Mean = 3.95, SD = 1.535), "I evaluate generated information" (Mean = 3.85, SD = 1.023), "I can see the importance of ideas" (Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.050), and "I develop my reasoning skills regularly" (Mean = 3.51, SD = 1.199). These suggest that while learners often engage in evaluation, synthesis, and development of reasoning, there is room for further reinforcement.

The results show a high proficiency in critical thinking among Grade 6 learners, particularly in independent and connected thinking. Integrating digital tools and fostering inquiry to enhance these skills, preparing learners for the evolving requirements of 21st-century education and future workplaces (Kuloğlu & Karabekmez, 2022; Mangubat & Ramirez, 2023; Cruz & Villanueva, 2022).

These findings align closely with critical thinking as a core 21st-century skill essential for analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information (Kuloğlu & Karabekmez, 2022). Fostering independent thinking enables learners to approach problems autonomously, a skill that is crucial in the rapidly evolving educational landscape (Mangubat & Ramirez, 2023). Furthermore, the application of digital learning tools has shown evidence that it enhances cognitive abilities and promotes meaningful engagement, supporting collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking (Cruz & Villanueva, 2022).

Challenges noted that educator preparedness and the need for inquiry-based approaches resonate with the relatively lower scores in some indicators, suggesting the necessity for sustained pedagogical support to maximize these competencies (Beethem & Sharpe, 2019; Buabeng-Andoh, 2019). Overall, the high proficiency in critical thinking among learners reflects the effective integration of inquiry and technology-enhanced strategies recommended to prepare students for future academic and workplace demands (Kuloğlu & Karabekmez, 2022; Mangubat & Ramirez, 2023; Cruz & Villanueva, 2022).

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I adjust my way of communicating depending on the person I am talking to.	4.51	0.910	Very High
I respect other people's point of view.	4.20	1.095	High
I keep communication confidential when needed.	4.19	0.988	High
I believe being skillful in communicating provides freedom to express my thoughts/feelings properly.	4.15	1.280	High
I see to it that I interpret received messages clearly.	4.13	0.962	High
I keep communication confidential when needed.	4.10	0.949	High
I can communicate effectively with others.	3.98	1.121	High
I use gestures to help me express my thoughts/feelings to others.	3.89	0.955	High
I ask questions if received messages are not clear to me.	3.64	1.052	High
I convey clear meanings.	3.61	1.046	High
Overall	4.04	0.642	High

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1:00 – 1:80	Never	Very Low

Table 3. 21st Century Skills among Grade 6 Learners in terms of Communication.

Table 3 shows that the communication skills among Grade 6 learners are generally high, with an overall mean of 4.04 (SD = 0.642). The indicator with the highest mean, "I adjust my way of communicating depending on the person I am talking to" (Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.910), indicates that learners frequently tailor their communication style to their audience. Other indicators, such as "I respect other people's point of view" (Mean = 4.20, SD = 1.095) and "I keep communication confidential when needed" (Mean = 4.19, SD = 0.988), reflect learners' respect for others' viewpoints and a conscientious attitude toward communication ethics.

Additionally, learners recognize the importance of clear expression and interpretation, as seen in responses like "I believe being skillful in communicating provides freedom to express my thoughts/feelings properly" (Mean = 4.15, SD = 1.280) and "I see to it that I interpret received messages clearly" (Mean = 4.13, SD = 0.962). They also employ diverse communication modes, such as effective verbal interaction (Mean = 3.98, SD = 1.121) and gestures (Mean = 3.89, SD = 0.955). Though the scores for clarifying questions (Mean = 3.64, SD = 1.052) and conveying clear meanings (Mean = 3.61, SD = 1.046) are slightly lower, these remain high.

These findings reflect important communication skills needed in the 21st century. The adaptability shown by learners aligns with the essential communication skills for interacting across diverse contexts and audiences, underscoring the role of communication adaptability (Lim & Fernando, 2020). Ethical communication practices, such as respecting viewpoints and confidentiality, are critical in academic and social settings (Liu & Chen, 2021).

The emphasis on clear expression and interpretation supports research advocating multimedia and digital communication literacy as part of effective communication (Santos & Beltran, 2021). The use of multiple communication modes corroborates the multifaceted nature of communication, which includes verbal, visual, and interactive components requiring continual development and practice (Garcia & Fernández, 2022; Lim & Fernando, 2020). Overall, these results

support calls for flexible communication skills that prepare learners for globalized and technology-rich environments (Liu & Chen, 2021; Patel & Singh, 2023; Lim & Fernando, 2020).

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I take a leadership role.	4.53	0.712	Very High
I love to work when it is done by group.	4.45	0.823	Very High
I analyze problems without blaming others.	4.38	0.992	Very High
I take time to respond to group problems/needs.	4.24	1.138	Very High
I facilitate contributions of group members.	4.20	0.860	High
I consider each one's weakness.	4.06	1.061	High
I participate in a class project to attain a common goal.	4.01	1.188	High
I believe that teamwork is essential at all times.	3.82	1.502	High
I foster a constructive group climate.	3.70	1.063	High
Overall	4.17	0.621	High

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 - 5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 - 4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 - 3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 - 2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1:00 - 1:80	Never	Very Low

Table 4. 21st Century Skills among Grade 6 Learners in terms of Collaboration.

Table 4 indicates that the level of collaboration skills among Grade 6 learners is generally high, with an overall mean of 4.17 (SD = 0.621), showing frequent collaborative behaviors. The highest-rated indicator is "I take a leadership role" (Mean = 4.53, SD = 0.712), highlighting learners' tendency to assume leadership in group settings. Other strong indicators include enjoying group work ("I love to work when it is done by group," Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.823) and analyzing problems constructively without blaming others ("I analyze problems without blaming others," Mean = 4.38, SD = 0.992).

Additional indicators, such as contributing to group assignments (Mean = 4.27, SD = 0.973) and responding to group needs (Mean = 4.24, SD = 1.138), point to active participation. Learners also facilitate group contributions (Mean = 4.20, SD = 0.860) and consider others' weaknesses (Mean = 4.06, SD = 1.061), demonstrating inclusivity. Lower but still positive ratings for participating in class projects (Mean = 4.01, SD = 1.188) and fostering constructive group climates (Mean = 3.70, SD = 1.063) indicate ongoing efforts in collaborative atmospheres.

These findings support the view that collaboration enhances leadership, accountability, and teamwork skills, which are crucial in modern workplaces (Williams & Carter, 2023; Johnson & Smith, 2020). Enjoyment of group work and constructive problem-solving align with studies emphasizing collaboration's role in developing interpersonal skills and adaptability in education (Ramirez & Lopez, 2021; Hernandez & Bautista, 2022).

Active engagement and responsiveness reflect the importance of participation and inclusivity in digital collaborative environments (De Leon & Pascua, 2021; Cruz & Tan, 2023). The significance of cultivating a collaborative culture that values diverse contributions is reinforced by research advocating mutual support and teamwork (Sari & Wahyudin, 2024; Hernandez & Bautista, 2022). Overall, Grade 6 learners demonstrate strong collaboration skills, which are vital for success in interconnected, team-oriented professional settings, aligning with the view that collaboration is a fundamental 21st-century skill (Johnson & Smith, 2020; Williams & Carter, 2023; De Leon & Pascua, 2021).

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I enjoy doing creative works.	4.38	0.828	Very High
I examine things carefully to understand what they mean.	4.36	0.736	Very High

I make connections to ideas.	4.29	0.984	Very High
I consider myself as a creative person.	4.22	0.885	Very High
I have a particular time during the day when I do most of my creative works.	4.21	1.042	Very High
I like to do creative works in class.	4.13	1.169	High
I am self-motivated to use my imagination.	3.96	1.139	High
I organize my ideas well so that my classmates will be able to understand what I suggest.	3.93	1.431	High
I explore different perspectives.	3.91	0.810	High
<i>I have a particular place where I do most of my creative works.</i>	3.72	1.413	High
Overall	4.11	0.603	High

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1:00 – 1:80	Never	Very Low

Table 5. 21st Century Skills among Grade 6 Learners in terms Creativity.

Table 5 shows that the level of creativity among Grade 6 learners is generally high, with an overall mean of 4.11 (SD = 0.603), indicating frequent engagement in creative activities. The highest-rated indicator is "I enjoy doing creative works" (Mean = 4.38, SD = 0.828), demonstrating learners' strong enjoyment in creative tasks. Other high indicators include "I examine things carefully to understand what they mean" (Mean = 4.36, SD = 0.736) and "I make connections to ideas" (Mean = 4.29, SD = 0.984), indicating careful observation and conceptual linking. Learners also perceive themselves as creative individuals ("I consider myself as a creative person," Mean = 4.22, SD = 0.885) and often set specific times for creativity ("I have a particular time during the day when I do most of my creative works," Mean = 4.21, SD = 1.042).

Slightly lower, yet still high means were noted for activity participation ("I like to do creative works in class," Mean = 4.13, SD = 1.169), motivation ("I am self-motivated to use my imagination," Mean = 3.96, SD = 1.139), and communication ("I organize my ideas well so that my classmates will understand what I suggest," Mean = 3.93, SD = 1.431). Further, learners explore diverse perspectives (Mean = 3.91, SD = 0.810) and prefer environments conducive to creativity (Mean = 3.72, SD = 1.413).

These results highlight key aspects of creativity aligned with scholarly research. The strong pleasure in creative work supports the role of creativity as a crucial 21st-century skill that fosters motivation, originality, and innovation to address complex problems (Anderson & Johnson, 2019; Brown & Lee, 2020). Careful examination and idea-linking demonstrate cognitive flexibility, a vital component of creative thinking (Martinez & Roberts, 2021; Kim & Thompson, 2022).

Positive self-perception and the allocation of creative time reflect engagement and confidence, both of which are essential for problem-solving (Rivera & Salcedo, 2023). Active participation and motivation underscore the importance of learner engagement and peer collaboration within creative processes (Gonzales & Chua, 2022; Villanueva & Ong, 2020). Consideration of diverse perspectives and supportive environments aligns with the literature, which emphasizes learner-centered spaces as fertile grounds for creativity (Kim & Thompson, 2022; Rivera & Salcedo, 2023).

Overall, these findings validate the literature advocating for digital integration, learner autonomy, and collaborative environments to nurture creativity as a core skill for the 21st century (Anderson & Johnson, 2019; Martinez & Roberts, 2021; Rivera & Salcedo, 2023).

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I am involved in structured volunteer position(s) in the community.	4.65	0.703	Very High
I stay informed of events in my community.	4.51	0.856	Very High
I participate in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility.	4.48	0.666	Very High
I believe that all citizens have a responsibility to their community.	4.44	0.822	Very High
<i>I encourage others to get involved in community service.</i>	4.40	0.905	Very High
I contribute to charitable organizations within the community.	4.36	0.706	Very High
I believe that I have a responsibility to help the poor and the hungry.	4.35	0.835	Very High
I am committed to serve in my community.	4.35	1.041	Very High
I help members of my community.	4.33	0.583	Very High
I feel responsible for my community.	4.21	1.058	Very High
I believe that it is important to volunteer.	4.21	1.087	Very High
I believe that it is important to financially support charitable organizations.	4.14	0.835	High
I believe that it is important to be informed of community issues.	4.06	1.182	High
I believe I should make a difference in my community.	3.99	1.055	High
When working with others, I make positive changes in the community.	3.94	1.222	High

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Description
5	4.21 –5.00	Always	Very High
4	3.41 –4.20	Often	High
3	2.61 –3.40	Sometimes	Moderate
2	1.81 –2.60	Rarely	Low
1	1:00 1:80	Never	Very Low

Table 6. The Level of Community Engagement among Grade 6 Learners

Table 6 shows that community engagement among Grade 6 learners is very high, with an overall mean of 4.29 (SD = 0.492), indicating consistent involvement in community-related activities. The highest-rated indicator is "I am involved in structured volunteer position(s) in the community" (Mean = 4.65, SD = 0.703), indicating active, organized participation. Other strong indicators include staying informed about community events (Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.856) and participating in social responsibility discussions (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.666), revealing awareness and active dialogue.

Learners also show strong civic responsibility beliefs ("I believe that all citizens have a responsibility to their community," Mean = 4.44, SD = 0.822) and encourage others to join community service (Mean = 4.40, SD = 0.905). Additionally, empathy is evident with high ratings for contributing to charitable organizations (Mean = 4.36, SD = 0.706) and feeling responsible for helping the less fortunate (Mean = 4.35, SD = 0.835). Slightly lower yet high scores reflect internalized responsibility and the importance of volunteering, financial support, and staying informed about community issues.

These findings align with the literature, underscoring the importance of community-based initiatives for fostering civic responsibility and active citizenship (Borhan, 2025; Sari & Wahyudin, 2024). The role of community knowledge and dialogue in cultivating critical thinking supports learners' awareness and engagement (Suyato et al., 2024; Borhan, 2025). The encouragement of collective responsibility and participation complements research emphasizing the importance of sustaining community participation programs through such attitudes (Torres & Villanueva, 2021). Furthermore, the high involvement in charitable activities supports experiential learning models that develop empathy, cultural awareness, and civic identity (Manalastas & Cruz, 2023; Lim & Rosario, 2022).

Overall, these results reinforce calls for integrating community-based learning in schools to nurture active citizenship and social responsibility among learners (Borhan, 2025; Sari & Wahyudin, 2024; Torres & Villanueva, 2021).

5	r	p-value	Interpretation
Critical Thinking	.889	.000	Significant
Communication	.829	.000	Significant
Collaboration	.811	.000	Significant
Creativity	.807	.000	Significant
Overall	.915	.000	Significant

Table 7. Relationship between 21st Century Skills and Community Engagement among Grade Learners.

Table 7 shows that significant relationships exist between 21st-century skills and community engagement among Grade 6 learners, with strong positive correlations across variables. "Critical Thinking" shows a strong positive correlation with community engagement ($r = 0.889$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that learners with higher critical thinking skills are more engaged in their communities. "Communication" also shows a strong correlation ($r = 0.829$, $p = 0.000$), highlighting the role of effective communication skills in facilitating meaningful community participation. The "Collaboration" variable ($r = 0.811$, $p = 0.000$) underscores the importance of teamwork and cooperative skills, while "Creativity" ($r = 0.807$, $p = 0.000$) highlights the role of innovative thinking in community involvement. The combined 21st-century skills variable has the strongest overall correlation with community engagement ($r = 0.915$, $p = 0.000$), rejecting the null hypothesis.

These findings are supported by the literature, which emphasizes the essential role of these competencies for active citizenship. Critical thinking fosters informed decision-making and problem-solving, which are needed for civic engagement (Kuloğlu & Karabekmez, 2022; Borhan, 2025). Communication is pivotal for expressing ideas clearly and collaborating across cultures in diverse settings (Liu & Chen, 2021; Lim & Fernando, 2020). Collaboration enhances interpersonal relationships and collective action vital to community participation (Johnson & Smith, 2020; Sari & Wahyudin, 2024).

Creativity contributes cognitive flexibility and the capacity to address social challenges with innovative solutions (Anderson & Johnson, 2019; Martinez & Roberts, 2021). The integrated development of these skills significantly prepares learners for meaningful civic involvement, as reflected in the reviewed literature (Borhan, 2025; Torres & Villanueva, 2021). Thus, these 21st-century skills collectively foster active and responsible citizenship among Grade 6 learners.

Therefore, the null hypothesis, that there is no significant relationship between 21st-century skills and community engagement among Grade 6 learners, is rejected.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provides a summary of the study, outlines the key findings, presents the conclusions, and offers recommendations derived from the results discussed in the preceding chapter.

Summary

This study examined the levels of 21st-century skills, specifically critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, as well as the degree of community engagement among Grade 6 learners. Additionally, it sought to determine whether significant relationships exist between each of these skills and community engagement.

It employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between Grade 6 learners' comprehension strategies and their historical awareness in San Fernando II District, Bukidnon. The data were collected using a standardized questionnaire adapted from existing studies, focusing on comprehension areas such as summarization and vocabulary, as well as historical awareness. They were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The sample consisted of 188 Grade 6 learners selected through random sampling from eight elementary schools within the district.

A descriptive – correlational data analysis method, which included mean and standard deviation to assess levels of comprehension and historical awareness, and Pearson correlation to explore their relationship, was used to analyze the data. The scoring used descriptive ratings to categorize learners' responses, facilitating clear interpretation. Ethical research standards guided the entire study, with required approvals secured from relevant bodies to protect participants' rights and welfare. This methodology ensured a systematic, responsible approach to understanding how comprehension skills relate to historical awareness in young learners.

Findings

The following were the study's findings.

The level of 21st-century skills among Grade 6 learners was high in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

The level of community engagement among Grade 6 learners was very high. The test for significant relationship revealed that each of the 21st-century skill variables: Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity had strong, significant relationships with community engagement among learners. When these skills were considered together, their relationship with community engagement remained strong, underscoring their collective influence.

Conclusions

The following were the conclusions derived from the research findings:

The study concluded that Grade 6 learners exhibited high levels of 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

These learners possessed essential competencies for effective problem-solving, interpersonal interaction, teamwork, and innovative thinking, all of which are vital for success in educational and social contexts. Community engagement among Grade 6 learners was very high, as evidenced by consistent participation in community-related activities and strong attitudes of responsibility, empathy, and social advocacy.

This elevated level of engagement reflects their preparedness to contribute positively to their communities. The relationship between 21st-century skills critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, and learners' community engagement is highly significant.

Recommendations

For learners and teachers. Learners may maintain their active engagement in activities that further develop their 21st-century skills, especially critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Teachers may incorporate diverse, interactive, and problem-based learning strategies that nurture these competencies through real-world applications and community-based projects, thereby enhancing both skill mastery and civic engagement.

For school administrators and curriculum planners. They may design and implement curriculum frameworks that integrate 21st-century skills explicitly alongside community engagement initiatives. Supporting educators' professional development to teach and assess these skills effectively will ensure alignment with modern educational goals, fostering learners' holistic development and preparing them for active roles in society.

For future researchers. Further studies are encouraged to explore specific instructional methods and community programs that optimally enhance the interconnectedness between 21st-century skills and community engagement across diverse contexts and grade levels.

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Data Availability Statement

The researcher, certify that this publication does not disclose or share any individual or identifiable data of the respondents. All information included in this study is presented in aggregate form to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents.

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Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.