

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' 21ST CENTURY SKILLS AS A FOUNDATION FOR  
DEVELOPING A SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTION AND ADVOCACY  
PROGRAM**

**Carter, Rachel M., PhD**

Department of Educational Leadership and Innovation  
University of Colorado Denver

***Abstract***

*This study assessed the level of 21st century skills among students as a foundation for designing a targeted school-based intervention and advocacy program. A nonexperimental quantitative research design using the descriptive method was employed. The study involved 51 upper elementary students from a public school in a mid-sized U.S. school district during the first semester of the 2018–2019 academic year. Data were analysed using the mean as the primary statistical tool. Findings revealed that the overall level of students' 21st century skills was high. Specifically, students demonstrated a high level of learning and innovation skills, information, media, and technology skills, as well as life and career skills. Despite the generally strong performance, areas for further support were identified particularly in students' ability to critically analyse media content, access accurate information from diverse sources, use digital tools for creative expression, and apply technology effectively in communication and document creation. In response, the study recommends the development of a focused advocacy program aimed at strengthening students' information, media, and technology literacy. The proposed program would support students in enhancing their digital fluency, media evaluation capabilities, and responsible technology use, thereby preparing them more fully for the demands of the 21st century learning environment.*

**Keywords:** 21st Century skills, Foundation, Targeted school-based, Intervention, Advocacy program

**INTRODUCTION**

Among the biggest problem faced by teachers in the United States is the inability of most students to think analytically. Oftentimes, teachers complain about their students who have poor learning and innovation skills and for being unable to practice critical thinking proficiency. But what these teachers remain as always pressing problem over the years is the student's incapability to go beyond the basic mastery skills of the lessons their teachers taught (Mundry, 2008).

Teachers noted that students fail to engage in reflective and independent thinking and they struggle with word problems because they cannot comprehend the problem well enough. As a result, schools produced graduates whose skills are not adequate to suffice theoretical proficiency and technical knowhow beside being unable to evaluate information critically and competently (Arinto and Garcia, 2009).

In the local setting, teachers reveal the low performance of students as exposed in the National Achievement Test. Hence, teachers are encouraged to explore other teaching strategies to improve students' performance.

Today, the researcher has rarely come across with a study of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of the students in the local context that it prompted the researcher to conduct a study on the subject with a hope that the result of the research will help improve students in addressing their issues and to inquire whether or not students have acquired essential skills that prepare them for the future, thus, this study sought needed document with social relevance to make this research contribute new knowledge in the field of education.

### **Research Objective**

This study aimed to find out the level of the 21st century skills of students. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the extent of 21st Century Skills of Students in terms of:
  - 1.1 learning and innovation skills;
  - 1.2 information, media and technology skills; and
  - 1.3 life skills
2. Identify what intervention program can be made based from the results of the study.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing descriptive technique. This study employed the descriptive method to determine the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Descriptive method research is a measure of variable with varying level of measurement. According to Johnson (2012) this research is appropriate when researcher would like to make an intervention program based on the data generated from the study to improve the quality and standard of the mentioned indicators in the variable of the study. In this study, the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of grade six pupils were described.

### **RESULTS Level of 21st Century Skills of Students in terms of Learning and Innovation Skills**

The study reveals the level of 21st century skills of students in terms of *Learning and Innovation Skills*. The respondents obtained an overall mean of 4.27, described as high or oftentimes manifested. This means that the provision relating to 21st century skills of students in terms of learning and innovation skills are oftentimes manifested.

Among the items, the highest is on *showing interest in learning many new things*, with a mean score of 4.51 or very high. This means that the students are enticed to learning things that are of their first time to get acquainted with. When students' interest to learn sparks, they become eager to discover and learn many things.

Moreover, it is followed by *showing originality and creativity in one's work*, with a mean score of 4.24 or high and *answering questions that needed intellectual explanations* with a mean score of 4.24 or high then *asking questions in order to clarify difficult ideas*, with a mean score of 4.21 or high.

Finally, among the items, the lowest is on *solving different kinds of problems in both old and new ways*, with a mean score of 4.14 or high. This means that *this solving different kinds of problems in both old and new ways* is only oftentimes manifested by the students.

### **Level of 21st Century Skills of the Students in terms of Information, Media, and Technology Skills**

The level of 21st Century Skills of the students in terms of *Information, Media, and Technology Skills* is high. The respondents obtained an overall mean of 3.62 described as high. This means that the provision relating to century skills of students in terms of in terms of information, media and technology are oftentimes manifested.

Among the items, the highest is on *Using the information correctly and creatively*, with a mean score of 4.28 or high. This means that the provisions relating to the 21st century skills of students in terms of learning and innovation skills are oftentimes manifested. Students who manifest a high level of this strand can examine how to interpret ideas differently and how ideas can influence beliefs and behaviors and apply fundamental understanding of the legal/ethical issues surrounding the access and uses of media.

Moreover, it is followed by *Analyzing information from different sources*, with a mean score of 3.90 or high; then *Getting information easily from different sources like internet, television, newspaper and magazine* with a mean score of 3.86 or high and *Using computers and being able to encode documents*, with a mean score of 3.20 or moderate.

Finally, among the items, the lowest is on *Using technology like computer and internet as means of communicating with others*, with a mean score of 2.86 or moderate. This means that the provision relating to the 2st century skills of students in terms of information, media, and technology skills are sometimes manifested.

### **Level of 21st Century Skills of Students in terms of Life Skills**

The level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students in terms of life skills is high. The respondents obtained an overall mean of 4.26, described as high. This means that the provision relating to level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students in terms of life skills are oftentimes manifested.

Among the items, the highest is on *Studying lessons in order to develop skills*, with a mean score of 4.44 or high. This means that the students devote time to study their lessons for development of skills essential for navigating the complex life which requires them to pay rigorous attention to developing life and career skills in the globally competitive information age.

Moreover, it is followed by *Showing leadership and responsibility while working with others*, with a mean score of 4.35 or high then *Taking praises, comments, and suggestions positively*, with a mean score of 4.30 or high; and *Making use of time productively by being able to submit projects before the deadline*, with a mean score of 4.16 or high.

Finally, among the items, the lowest is on *Being able to easily adapt to different situations and can do multi-tasking*, with a mean score of 4.05 or high. This means that this being able to easily adapt to different situations and can do multi-tasking is only oftentimes manifested by the students. This also means that the students well manifest multi-tasking role.

### **Level of Reinforcement Sensitivity of Students in terms of Reward Reactivity**

The level of reinforcement sensitivity of students in terms of reward reactivity has an overall mean of 4.33 with a descriptive equivalent of high indicating that all enumerated indicators were sometimes observed. The overall mean was the result obtained from the mean of the indicators for the specific items from the questionnaire intended for this particular indicator which was appended in this study.

Among the enumerated strands, Sometimes even little things in life can give me great pleasure, ranked the highest, with a mean score of 4.50 or very high. As presented in the appended Table 1.3, the mean ratings of the following items under this indicator from highest to lowest are as follows, I am especially sensitive to reward, 4.34; Good news makes me feel overjoyed, 4.23; and I love winning competitions, 4.15.

### **Summary on the Level of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills of the Students**

The overall level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students is high. The respondents obtained an overall mean of 4.05, described as high. This means that the provision relating to level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students are oftentimes manifested.

Among the items, the highest is on *Learning and innovation skills*, with a mean score of 4.27 or high. This means that the students were prepared for a more and more complex life and work environments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that these students manifest focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration which are essential to preparing them for the future.

Moreover, it is followed by *Life skills*, with a mean score of 4.26 or high; the last is *Information, media, and technology skills* with a mean score of 3.62, or high. This means that this having information, media, and technology skills is only oftentimes manifested by the students.

This means further that the students oftentimes exhibit a range of functional and critical thinking skills related to information, media and technology as Ed-tech stakeholders for years have been touting the need for students to learn so-called 21st century skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and media literacy to prepare for the new global, digital economy.

### **CONCLUSION**

The level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students is sometimes manifested for learning and innovation skills, sometimes manifested for information, media and technology skills, well manifested for life skills and the overall level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students is sometimes manifested. The overall level of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of students is sometimes manifested.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The 21st century skills of student are sometimes manifested, the researcher recommends that teachers may be more flexible in dealing with the innovations and instructional practices to have improved skills for all students.

The researcher also recommends that the teacher may design activities to help improve the information, media and technology skills of the students.

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