



Research Article

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21st Century Skills among English Language Teachers in Kerala

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Abstract: *The present study examined the level of 21st century skills among the English language teachers in Kerala. For this purpose the Four Communication Skills Scale (4CS) constructed and validated by the investigator was used for data collection. The sample consisted of 500 in service English language teachers from different colleges in Northern Kerala, India. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted. The collected data was subjected to descriptive analysis and percentage counts. The findings of the study revealed that 44% of English language teachers are having average level of 21st Century skills and its components namely critical thinking, collaborative, communicating and creative thinking skills. From the mean value it is also inferred that English teachers are having relatively high level of collaborative skills followed by communication, critical thinking and creative skills.*

Keywords: 21st Century Skills, English Language Teachers, Critical Thinking skills Communication skills, Creative skills, Collaborative skills.

INTRODUCTION

English language holds a key position when it pertains to secondary and tertiary education in almost two-thirds of the world space of education. The language has enjoyed, and still continues to enjoy, as the only medium of instruction for all streams of professional education in world acclaimed universities. Globalization of English language is an accepted truth in all sectors of tertiary education whereby effective English Language teaching becomes pivotal to propounding and propagating teachers across continents. However, many language teachers fail to get equipped with dynamic skills of English language teaching to prepare the students of 21st Century who are digital natives the language teacher is expected to be potential with the skills crucial for 21st century teaching feasibilities. So, it is mandatory for all effective English Language teachers to incorporate the four C's and technology with respect to the global language used for tertiary education programmes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study pertains to the concept that a language teacher plays an indomitable role in deciding the competences and skills developed in a learner with respect to 21st century skills and digital supported learning. The 21st Century teacher and a teacher educator must also, not in any case, overlook the needs and challenges faced by learners of present age of education. Today the skills and competencies needed for teacher effectiveness has changed from traditional competencies to digital based competencies. Hence, the need for four communication skill namely

critical thinking, communication, creative and collaborative skills for teacher effectiveness to teach present century learners was felt by the investigator and hence intended to study the levels of 21st century skills among English language teachers.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the level of 21st century skills among English language teachers.
- To find out the level of critical thinking skills among English Language teachers.
- To find out the level of communication skills among English Language teachers.
- To find out the level of creative skills among English Language teachers.
- To find out the level of collaborative skills among English Language teachers.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study the investigator followed normative survey method. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select the subjects for the present study and about 500 in service English language teachers from different colleges in Northern Kerala were included as sample to collect the data. The Four Communication Skills Scale (4CS) constructed and validated by the investigator was used for data collection. The collected data was subjected to descriptive analysis and percentage counts. This study is confined to only the English language teachers working in colleges of Kerala state, India

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

One of the important objectives of the present study is to find out the different 21st Century Skills

among English language teachers. For this purpose the traditional method of $M \pm \sigma$ was followed by the investigator.

Calculated Levels of 21st Century Skills by $M \pm \sigma$ Method

Variable & Dimensions	S. No	Method	Mean	S.D	Score	Level
21 st Century Skills(4CS)	1.	Mean + SD	159.10+18.70		178 and above	High
	2.	In between Scores			141-177	Average
	3.	Mean - SD	159.50-18.70		140 and below	Low
Critical Thinking Skills	1.	Mean + SD	33.89+4.80		39 and above	High
	2.	In between Scores			30-38	Average
	3.	Mean - SD	33.89-4.80		29 and below	Low
Communication Skills	1.	Mean + SD	44.07+3.67		48 and above	High
	2.	In between Scores			42-47	Average
	3.	Mean - SD	44.07-3.67		41 and below	Low
Creative Skills	1.	Mean + SD	30.54+4.03		35 and above	High
	2.	In between Scores			26-34	Average
	3.	Mean - SD	30.54-4.03		25 and below	Low
Collaborative Skills	1	Mean + SD	50.60+6.89		57 and above	High
	2	In between Scores			45-56	Average
	3	Mean - SD	50.60-6.89		44 and below	Low

The mean and standard deviation for the 21st century skills scale (4CS) were computed for the entire sample of the present study. The computed values were

given in table 1 and it was also graphically represented in Figure-1.

Table 1. Showing the Mean and Standard Deviation Scores 21st Century Skills and its Dimensions

Variable & Dimensions	N	Mean	SD
21 st Century Skills	500	159.10	18.70
Critical Thinking Skills	500	33.89	4.80
Communication Skills	500	44.07	3.67
Creative Skills	500	30.54	4.03
Collaborative Skills	500	50.60	6.89

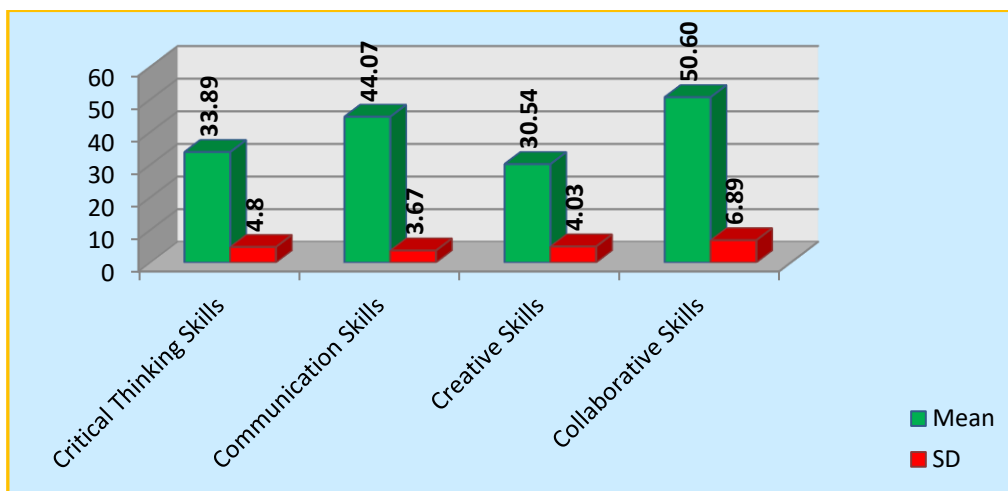


Fig 1. Bar Diagram Showing the Mean and Standard Deviation for and its Dimensions of 21st Century Skills Interpretation

One of the objectives of the present study is to find out the level of 21st Century Skills among English Language teachers. For this purpose the Mean and Standard Deviation for 21st Century Skills (4CS) scores and its Dimensions were calculated and listed in table-1. From the table, it inferred that:

- The calculated mean and standard deviation for total 21st century skills scores of the entire sample is found to be 159.10 and 18.70 respectively. The mean score lay in between ($M \pm \sigma$) value i.e., 141 to 178, Hence, it is inferred that the English language teachers possess average level of 21st century skills.
- The calculated mean and standard deviation for critical thinking skills (Dimension - 1) scores of the entire sample is found to be 33.89 and 4.80 respectively. The mean score lay in between ($M \pm \sigma$) value i.e., 30 to 38, Hence, it is inferred that the English language teachers have average level of critical thinking skills.
- The calculated mean and standard deviation for communication skills (Dimension - 2) scores of the entire sample is found to be 44.07 and 3.67 respectively. The mean score lay in between

($M \pm \sigma$) value i.e., 42 to 47, Hence, it is inferred that the English language teachers have average level of communication skills.

- The calculated mean and standard deviation for creative skills (Dimension - 3) scores of the entire sample is found to be 30.54 and 4.03 respectively. The mean score lay in between ($M \pm \sigma$) value i.e., 26 to 34, Hence, it is inferred that the English language teachers possess average level of creative skills.
- The calculated mean and standard deviation for collaborative skills (Dimension - 4) scores of the entire sample is found to be 50.60 and 6.89 respectively. The mean score lay in between ($M \pm \sigma$) value i.e., 45 to 56, Hence, it is inferred that English language teachers have average level of collaborative skills.

Percentage Analysis of 21st Century Skills (4CS)

The frequency and percentage analysis were carried out for 4CS scores. The low, average and high levels of 21st Century skills for the entire sample (N=500) is given in table-2.

Table 2. Percentage analysis for 21st Century Skills (4CS) scores of English language teachers

Variable	Category	N	Percentage
21 st Century Skills	Low	130	26%
	Average	213	43%
	High	157	31%
Critical Thinking Skills	Low	130	26%
	Average	251	50%
	High	121	24%
Communication Skills	Low	101	20%
	Average	244	49%
	High	155	31%
Creative Skills	Low	120	24%
	Average	268	54%
	High	112	22%
Collaborative Skills	Low	95	19%
	Average	223	45%
	High	182	36%
Total		500	100%

It is evident from table-2, among 500 English language teachers 130 English language teachers have low level scores, 213 English language teachers have average level scores and 157 English language teachers have high level scores. Hence, it is found that 26% of the teachers possess low level, 43% are having average

level and 31% are having high level of 21st century skills. The percentage counts for the dimensions of 21st century skills also calculated and given in above table as self-explanatory. It is also graphically represented as below.

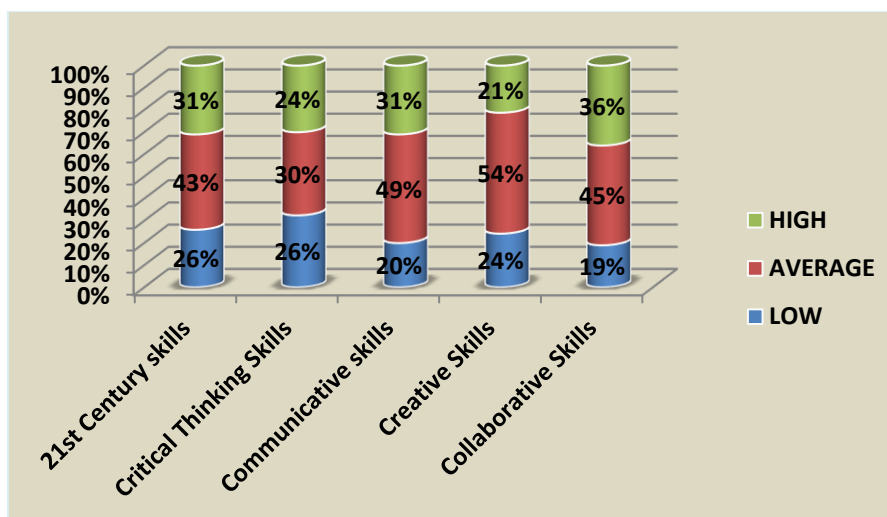


Figure 2. Showing the low, average and high levels of 21st Century skills and its Dimensions among English language teachers

It is evident from table 2 among the 500 English language teachers 155 English language teachers have low level scores, 263 English language teachers have average level scores and 182 English language teachers have high level scores. Hence, it is found that (26%) of the teachers are having low level, 43% are having average level and 31% are having high level of 21st century skills.

Findings of the Study

- The level of 21st century skills among the English language teachers is average.
- The level of critical thinking skills among the English language teachers is average.
- The level of communication skills among the English language teachers is average.
- The level of creative skills among the English language teachers is average.
- The level of collaborative skills among the English language teachers is average.
- Among 500 English language teachers 26% of the teachers are having low level, 43% are having average level and 31% are having high level of 21st century skills.
- English teachers are having relatively high level of collaborative skills followed by communication, critical thinking and creative skills.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to study the level of 21st century skills among the English language teachers in Kerala. It is concluded that the average level of 21st century skills among English language teachers in Kerala and components namely critical thinking skills, communication skills, creative skills and collaborative skills. In the light of the findings it is recommended that measures have to be taken to improve the level of 21st century skills among the English language teachers in Kerala to improve the teacher effectiveness.

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