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## Research Article

### Levels of Historical Consciousness and Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage among Grade 8 Students in Lucena City

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#### ABSTRACT

This research explored the levels of historical consciousness and appreciation for local cultural heritage among Grade 8 students from Lucena City and established the relationship between the two variables.

A descriptive-correlational design was utilized with 128 students (20% of the entire Grade 8 population) at Lucena City National High School for the school year 2024–2025. Stratified random sampling was used to guarantee proportional representation from 14 sections. Data were collected through a validated 4-point Likert scale questionnaire assessing four dimensions of historical consciousness—knowledge of local history, understanding of local context, critical thinking skills in history, and connection to the past—and four dimensions of appreciation of local cultural heritage—knowledge of cultural practices, engagement with local cultural heritage, attitudes toward cultural heritage, and perceived value of cultural heritage. Descriptive statistics encapsulated the levels of both variables, and Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship at a 0.01 significance level.

Students showed overall high historical consciousness, and "connection to the past" was the highest. High appreciation of local cultural heritage was also seen, especially in cultural participation and perceived value. A high positive correlation was found between historical consciousness and appreciation of cultural heritage. However, students lacked some detailed knowledge of important historical events and active involvement in preservation activities.

The findings indicate that combining place-based education, experiential learning, and culturally responsive pedagogy can strengthen historical consciousness and appreciation of heritage. The findings offer practical recommendations for policymakers, educators, and community partners in curricular and program design that enhance students' cultural identity and civic literacy.

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## Background

Historical consciousness—the capacity to understand the past, relate it to the present, and perceive its effect on the future—is essential in creating civic participation and cultural identity. In the globalized world today, protecting local cultural heritage is not only a means to preserve tradition but also a means of building a sense of identity and accountability among the youth (UNESCO, 2022).

In the Philippine setting, the Department of Education incorporates national and local history into the K–12 curriculum via subjects like Araling Panlipunan and MAPEH (DepEd, 2019). Recent research has nevertheless shown persistent gaps between students' exposure to and uptake of local history and their participation in cultural preservation (Santos, 2021; Pastera, 2024). Research also indicates that firsthand exposure to heritage sites and community ways increases appreciation and attachment to local culture (Reyes & Cruz, 2020).

Learning styles and culturally responsive pedagogy affect how history is learned and utilized. Theories like Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 2016), Cultural Memory Theory (Assmann & Assmann, 2020), and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2019) highlight the experiential, contextualized, and identity-based learning as central to students' study of history. Current research underscores that matching teaching methods to students' cultural backgrounds enhances retention, critical thinking, and value development (Kapsali, 2023; Shih, 2022).

With Lucena City having a rich historical and cultural past—lived on in its festivals, landmarks, and customary traditions—it studied Grade 8 students' historical consciousness and how it is tied to their appreciation of local cultural heritage. Findings are anticipated to guide educational plans that bridge gaps in knowledge, deepen engagement with heritage, and reinforce local identity among the young.

Recent studies reveal a waning interest and involvement of students in activities related to local cultural heritage in the Philippines. Only

39% of young Filipinos, according to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2021), are very interested in discovering the country's history and culture, with gaps in historical consciousness. In addition, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA, 2022) reports show a reduction by 25% of student participation in cultural activities between 2016 and 2022, which points towards increasing alienation from culture.

This waning interest has dire implications for civic engagement and cultural heritage. The Philippine Statistics Authority (2023) captures that local communities with a high sense of regional identity experience a 15% hike in civic engagement, highlighting the value of historical awareness in instilling social responsibility. UNESCO (2022) also highlights that cultural heritage needs to be included in school curricula to safeguard cultural identity and facilitate knowledge transfer between generations.

## Method

### *Research Design*

This study used a descriptive–correlational design to assess the level of historical consciousness of Grade 8 students from Lucena City National High School and its correlation with their appreciation of local cultural heritage. The survey questionnaire with a 4-point Likert scale was used to quantify key variables. Descriptive data analysis was used to determine levels of students' historical consciousness and cultural appreciation, while Pearson's correlation analysis was used to test the relationships between the variables. Results offer an understanding of how students are conscious of history and related to cultural heritage, which are the bases for educational and community intervention.

### *Respondents and Sampling Technique*

The study included 128 Grade 8 students from Lucena City National High School for the school year 2024–2025, which is approximately 20% of the Grade 8 population (641 students). These students were chosen by using

stratified random sampling to guarantee proportional numbers from the 14 sections in this grade level. The sample size was calculated

using the formula: Sample Size = Population  $\times$  Sampling Percentage ( $641 \times 0.20 = 128$  students).

Table 1. Respondents' Sample Size as to Section

Section	Male	Female	Total Students	Sample Size	Rounded (Approximately)
Calmness	23	23	46	$46 / 641 \times 128 = 9.18$	9
Faithfulness	23	22	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Felicity	20	28	48	$48 / 641 \times 128 = 9.59$	10
Fortitude	23	22	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Friendship	21	25	46	$46 / 641 \times 128 = 9.18$	9
Gracefulness	21	24	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Gratitude	20	25	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Justice	22	22	44	$44 / 641 \times 128 = 8.79$	9
Prudence	26	20	46	$46 / 641 \times 128 = 9.18$	9
Resourcefulness	26	21	47	$47 / 641 \times 128 = 9.39$	9
Simplicity	24	21	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Solidarity	23	22	45	$45 / 641 \times 128 = 8.99$	9
Steadfast	25	23	48	$48 / 641 \times 128 = 9.59$	10
Trustworthy	26	20	46	$46 / 641 \times 128 = 9.18$	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>641</b>		<b>128</b>

The number of respondents by section was computed using Section Sample Size = (Total Students in Section  $\times$  128) / 641, after which students were randomly chosen using a ran-

domizer tool. This method ensured equal selection chances, minimized sampling bias, and enhanced the generalizability of the study findings.

Table 2. Respondents' Sample Size as to Sex

Section	Sample Size	Male Sample	Female Sample
Calmness	9	5	4
Faithfulness	9	5	4
Felicity	10	4	6
Fortitude	9	5	4
Friendship	9	4	5
Gracefulness	9	4	5
Gratitude	9	4	5
Justice	9	4	5
Prudence	9	5	4
Resourcefulness	9	5	4
Simplicity	9	5	4
Solidarity	9	5	4
Steadfast	10	5	5
Trustworthy	9	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>64</b>

### Ethical Concerns and Data Gathering

After securing permission from school authorities, the research was conducted ethically

by obtaining parental consent, keeping the participants' identities confidential, and emphasizing voluntary participation. Data were

collected using a 4-point Likert scale survey questionnaire administered to 128 Grade 8 students of Lucena City National High School. A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted to assess its reliability and clarity. The students completed the questionnaire within 30 minutes in a controlled setting to minimize biased responses. All information was anonymized and statistically processed.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

The study employed descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation, were used to determine the

levels of Grade 8 students' historical consciousness and cultural heritage appreciation. To measure the relationship between historical consciousness and cultural heritage appreciation, Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied to quantify the degree and significance of the associations among the variables. The level of statistical significance was set at 0.01.

## Result and Discussion

### Part I. Respondents' Demographic Profile

The tables in Part I display the demographic profile of respondents, including their age, sex, number of years residing in Lucena City, and frequency of visits to heritage sites.

Table 3. Respondents' Demographic Profile as to Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
13 years old	43	33.60
14 years old	72	56.30
15 years old	13	10.20
<b>Overall</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 3 presents the age profile of the 128 Grade 8 student respondents. The majority, 56.30%, are aged 14 years old, which corresponds to the typical age for students at this grade level. Meanwhile, 33.60% are aged 13 years old, which may indicate early school

entrance or grade advancement. A smaller group, 10.20%, is aged 15 years old, which may be due to late school entrance or grade repetition. Overall, the respondents' ages fall within the standard range for Grade 8 students.

Table 4. Respondents' Demographic Profile as to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	64	50.00
Female	64	50.00
<b>Overall</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 4 shows the sex distribution of the 128 Grade 8 respondents. Both male and female students are equally represented, with each group having 64 respondents, accounting for 50.00% of the total. This equal distribution

ensures an equitable representation of both sexes, allowing for a more objective discussion of historical consciousness and local cultural heritage appreciation.

Table 5. Respondents' Demographic Profile as to Length of Residence in Lucena City

Residence	Frequency	Percent
1 to 3 years	15	11.70
4 to 6 years	7	5.50
7 to 9 years	10	7.80
10 years and above	96	75.00
<b>Overall</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 5 exhibits the length of residence in Lucena City of the respondents. The overwhelming majority, ninety-six students (75.00%), have lived in the city for more than 10 years. A moderate number, fifteen students (11.70%), lived for 1 to 3 years, then ten students (7.80%) lived for 7 to 9 years, and seven

students (5.50%) lived for 4 to 6 years. This distribution suggests that most respondents have a long exposure to Lucena City's cultural heritage, which may influence their historical consciousness and appreciation of local traditions.

*Table 6. Respondents' Demographic Profile as to Annual Frequency of Heritage Site Visits*

Visiting Heritage Sites	Frequency	Percent
1 to 3 times	45	35.20
4 to 6 times	38	29.70
7 to 9 times	24	18.80
10 times or above	21	16.40
<b>Overall</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 6 shows the respondents' frequency of visits to heritage sites annually. The majority, 45 students (35.20%), make 1 to 3 yearly visits, followed by 38 students (29.70%) who visit 4 to 6 times per year. Meanwhile, 24 students (18.80%) visited 7 to 9 times, and 21 students (16.40%) visited more than 10 times. It suggests that many students have minimal interaction with heritage sites, thus restricting their firsthand experiences of local history and cultural heritage and, by extension, their awareness and appreciation of history.

## **Part II. Practices on Historical Consciousness**

This section examines the level of historical consciousness among Grade 8 students, providing insight into how well they know and interpret their community's past. Historical consciousness is analysed in four major dimensions: Knowledge of Local History, Understanding of Local Context, Critical Thinking Skills in History, and Connection to the Past. These dimensions reflect students' awareness, analytical skills, and personal connections to local history.

*Table 7. Respondents' Level of Historical Consciousness as to Knowledge of Local History*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students can name Lucena City's key historical events since 1882.	2.47	0.64	Low
2. The students know prominent historical figures and leaders of Lucena City.	2.99	0.57	High
3. The students can identify all major historical sites and heritage structures.	3.02	0.63	High
4. The students understand significant historical developments and their impacts.	3.02	0.62	High
5. The students know how Lucena City evolved from a fishing village to a provincial capital	2.47	0.72	Low
6. The students can explain local traditions and cultural practices.	2.67	0.73	High
7. The students understand Lucena City's role in Philippine national history.	2.83	0.72	High
8. The students know the city's economic transformation through time.	2.90	0.70	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
9. The students are familiar with indigenous peoples and early settlers.	2.71	0.77	High
10. The students understand colonial influences on Lucena City's development.	2.88	0.67	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 7 presents the respondents' level of historical consciousness in terms of knowledge of local history. The overall mean score of 2.80 falls within the "High" category, indicating that respondents generally agree they possess substantial knowledge about Lucena City's historical background. Most statements received a mean score corresponding to the "High" category, reflecting strong awareness of key aspects of the city's history.

Respondents agreed that they recognize prominent historical figures and leaders (2.99), know major historical sites and heritage structures (3.02), and understand significant historical developments and their impacts (3.02). They also agreed they could explain local traditions and cultural practices (2.67), understand Lucena City's role in Philippine national history (2.83), are aware of its economic transformation over time (2.90), know indigenous peoples and early settlers (2.71), and understand colonial influences on the city's development (2.88).

However, two statements received a "Low" interpretation: identifying Lucena City's key

historical events since its establishment in 1882 (2.47) and understanding its transformation from a fishing village to a provincial capital (2.47). These results indicate gaps in specific historical knowledge, particularly concerning the city's early history and transformation processes.

Students demonstrate a high level of general historical consciousness; however, specific interventions are recommended to solidify further their knowledge of significant historical events and the underlying narrative of Lucena City. Filling these gaps may create a more inclusive historical consciousness, allowing students not just to recognize key figures and places but also to understand the chronology and processes forming their community's identity. It is supported by comparative studies, including the cultural mapping of ancestral homes in Lucena City, which highlight the significance of identifying and maintaining historical sites for community education and awareness (Rodriguez et al., 2022).

*Table 8. Respondents' Level of Historical Consciousness as to Understanding of Local Context*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students understand Lucena City's connection to national historical events.	2.76	0.62	High
2. The students can explain how local events shaped Lucena City's community.	2.45	0.74	Low
3. The students recognize historical, social, and political issues.	3.02	0.60	High
4. The students can compare Lucena City's history with neighboring areas.	2.91	0.76	High
5. The students can connect historical changes to present challenges.	2.85	0.62	High
6. The students understand how cultural traditions evolved.	2.92	0.61	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
7. The students can explain economic shifts throughout Lucena City's history.	2.72	0.65	High
8. The students recognize the influence of different governance periods.	2.60	0.71	High
9. The students understand demographic changes in Lucena City through time.	2.90	0.60	High
10. The students can track how local systems and institutions have changed.	2.70	0.74	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 8 shows the respondents' degree of historical consciousness in terms of their knowledge of the local context of Lucena City. With a mean value of 2.78, the overall outcome ranges under "High," denoting relatively high historical consciousness levels.

The highest mean ratings were achieved in topics like recognition of historical social and political concerns (3.02), knowledge of the development of cultural customs (2.92), comparison of the history of Lucena City with neighboring localities (2.91), and relating historical transformations to contemporary issues (2.85). These results suggest that the respondents can identify large-scale processes of cultural change and historical evolution and connect such processes to the present day. Their capacity to place the history of Lucena within regional-scale processes is a hopeful sign for the development of critical consciousness.

However, there are significant gaps. The lowest mean score was the respondents' knowledge on how local events shaped Lucena City's community (2.45) under the category of "Low." It indicates insufficient profound analysis of cause-and-effect dynamics in the local historical context. Moderate scores in describing economic changes (2.72) and mapping out how local systems and institutions have evolved (2.70) also reflect a surface-level comprehension of more intricate historical

dynamics. Respondents thereby reflect sensitivity to historical truths and evident cultural manifestations, but could lack the ability to provide well-argued historical accounts that critically link past choices to current situations.

In short, though the respondents have a "High" historical consciousness about the history of Lucena City, there is an urgent call to build a more analytical and contemplative aspect of that consciousness. Such an aspect needs to be fortified not only to reinforce the value appreciation of the city's multifaceted history but also to nurture educated and ethical responses to existing and future issues. It highlights the need for adopting pedagogic strategies that aim to critically examine the local history (Santos, 2021). By developing a better understanding of how certain events influenced Lucena City's history, teachers can strongly boost historical awareness and facilitate an integration-conscious and self-reflective conception of community growth. Moreover, Colminar and Padullo (2023) highlighted the importance of applying analytical thinking and creative pedagogical approaches to learning local history. By addressing issues like resource constraints and ineffective teaching strategies, and by promoting experiential, community-focused learning, students' interest in local history can be further strengthened, leading to more mindful and active citizen participation.

*Table 9. Respondents' Level of Historical Consciousness as to Critical Thinking Skills in History*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students can identify primary and secondary sources about Lucena City.	2.59	0.74	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
2. The students can distinguish historical facts from opinions and myths.	2.63	0.71	High
3. The students critically evaluate school materials about Lucena City's history.	2.89	0.65	High
4. The students compare past and present conditions to track changes.	2.98	0.74	High
5. The students can conclude from historical evidence.	2.45	0.75	Low
6. The students can analyse biases in historical narratives.	2.55	0.74	High
7. The students understand different historical interpretations of events.	2.81	0.67	High
8. The students can evaluate the reliability of historical sources.	2.70	0.68	High
9. The students can identify cause-and-effect relationships in local history.	2.78	0.71	High
10. The students use evidence to support historical arguments about Lucena City.	2.80	0.66	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 9 shows the level of historical consciousness of the respondents in terms of their critical thinking skills in history. With an overall mean score of 2.72, the results are categorized as "High," which means that the respondents have excellent critical thinking capacities. They tend to reflect actively on cognition when interpreting historical data, especially in evaluating and making sense of the historical account of Lucena City.

The highest mean scores were attained in comparing past and present conditions to track changes (2.98), critically evaluating school materials on Lucena City's history (2.89), and understanding different historical interpretations of the events (2.81). These results suggest that participants are adept at considering history from multiple vantage points, judging the validity of learning materials, and identifying patterns of continuity and change over time—essential abilities in historical thinking and indicators of a high degree of critical consciousness. These abilities demonstrate that the respondents progress beyond recitation to active historical questioning and analysis.

Nonetheless, the lowest mean was in concluding historical evidence (2.45), which counts as "Low" and indicates a significant weakness. Although respondents can judge materials and recognize historical changes, they fare worse at combining evidence to construct well-supported conclusions for history. This pattern concurs with previous work by Benedicto and Andrade (2022), which concluded that even when students are skilled at argument evaluation, they tend to perform poorly in creating evidence-based historical conclusions.

The findings indicate that although respondents possess robust analytical skills—most notably in assessing sources and identifying historical change—there is a gap to improve their evidentiary reasoning capacity and making justified historical arguments. Instructional interventions that target such a deficit through, for example, inquiry activities, historical thinking tasks, and evidence-supported writing exercises may be helpful to bridge the gap and adequately prepare students for high-level historical interpretation.



Table 10. Respondents' Level of Historical Consciousness as to Connection to the Past

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students feel connected to Lucena City through family traditions.	3.04	0.71	High
2. The students enjoy participating in historical celebrations.	3.31	0.65	High
3. The students are curious about the elders' stories of old Lucena City.	3.40	0.57	High
4. The students feel proud of Lucena City's cultural contributions.	3.39	0.59	High
5. The students value local history's role in their identity.	3.16	0.52	High
6. The students actively preserve family historical records.	3.12	0.62	High
7. The students share local historical knowledge with others.	3.03	0.69	High
8. The students visit historical sites to maintain connections.	2.90	0.70	High
9. The students practice traditional customs and rituals.	3.02	0.64	High
10. The students collect and treasure local historical artifacts.	2.88	0.85	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 10 shows the level of historical consciousness of respondents in terms of connection to the past, with an overall mean score of 3.12, which is in the "High" category. It suggests that respondents have a strong cultural and emotional sense of attachment to the historical heritage of Lucena City. The research indicates that students not only know about their history in a local sense but are also personally and emotionally invested in it, often through family tradition, cultural practices, and general interest in the past.

The highest mean scores were recorded in curiosity about elders' stories of old Lucena City (3.40) and pride in Lucena City's cultural contributions (3.39), reflecting the strength of oral tradition and a deep sense of belonging rooted in cultural identity. Participation in historical celebrations (3.31) and valuing local history's role in shaping personal identity (3.16) also highlight active engagement with and internalization of historical customs.

These findings align with research emphasizing the family and community as key transmitters of cultural heritage. For example, Casanova (2022) found that oral tradition and family involvement play a central role in

preserving the Hanunuo heritage language. Similarly, Chan (2021) highlighted storytelling as a traditional indigenous method for passing knowledge across generations.

Respondents also expressed a commitment to preserving family historical records (3.12) and sharing local historical knowledge (3.03), underscoring the role of intergenerational transmission in maintaining local memory. However, slightly lower mean scores were observed for visiting historical sites to maintain connections (2.90) and collecting and treasuring local historical artifacts (2.88). While these scores are still in the "High" category, they suggest that students are more engaged in intangible heritage practices (stories, commemorations) than in tangible heritage activities (visiting sites, preserving artifacts).

This realization has two immediate implications: first, family members, elders, and community heritage bearers play a decisive role in promoting historical consciousness among young people; second, there is potential to enhance experiential learning by providing more opportunities for site visits, museum visits, and material heritage conservation. Making these experiences more intensive could improve

students' experiential link with the past, resulting in a richer, more comprehensive understanding of local history.

In sum, the respondents show a strong emotional and cultural connection with Lucena City's past, primarily through family histories and community pride. Educational activities

must still foster the connection while promoting more tangible heritage experiences. Intangible and tangible heritage appreciation in balance will not only widen students' understanding of history but also develop a long-term, participatory sense of historical awareness and responsibility.

*Table 11. Summary of Perceived Level of Historical Consciousness*

Types	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Knowledge of Local History	2.80	0.68	High
Understanding of Local Context	2.78	0.67	High
Critical Thinking Skills in History	2.72	0.71	High
Connection to the Past	3.12	0.65	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 11 presents the respondents' perceived degree of historical consciousness, with an overall mean score of 2.86, interpreted as "High." It demonstrates that the Grade 8 students of Lucena City possess a high and consistent awareness of local history across multiple dimensions. Among the four dimensions assessed, Connection to the Past had the highest mean score (3.12), as it reflects students' strong identification with their cultural past, traditions, and heritage. Likewise, Knowledge of Local History (2.80) and Understanding of Local Context (2.78) indicate a solid grasp of essential events and developments that have shaped Lucena City. In contrast, Critical Thinking Skills in History (2.72) demonstrate a notable capacity for critically reading and evaluating historical accounts.

The high mean scores in these areas provide evidence that students are not only aware of historical facts but also capable of relating them to broader cultural and societal contexts. Their elevated level of historical consciousness confirms that they are well-positioned to respect their city's heritage and contribute posi-

tively to its preservation and promotion. However, while the results are encouraging, they also reveal areas for improvement—most notably in refining critical thinking and enhancing analytical engagement with historical evidence. Strengthening these areas can further elevate students' historical consciousness to a "Very High" level, making them more reflective and active participants in their community's historical processes.

### **Part III. Practices on Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage**

Evaluating students' level of appreciation for local cultural heritage is essential for determining their connection to traditional practices and values. The assessment focuses on four dimensions: Knowledge of Cultural Practices, Engagement with Local Cultural Heritage, Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage, and Value of Local Cultural Heritage. These categories provide insight into students' awareness, practices, and perceptions, guiding strategies for cultural education and heritage preservation.

*Table 12. Respondents' Level of Appreciation as to Knowledge of Cultural Practices*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students know Lucena City's traditional foods and delicacies.	3.39	0.68	High
2. The students are familiar with local arts and handicrafts.	3.04	0.77	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
3. The students can identify festivals and their significance.	3.13	0.67	High
4. The students understand unique local cultural expressions.	3.08	0.66	High
5. The students recognize the value of cultural preservation.	3.05	0.71	High
6. The students know traditional customs and ceremonies.	3.05	0.68	High
7. The students understand local religious practices.	3.04	0.63	High
8. The students are familiar with traditional games and pastimes.	3.49	0.61	High
9. The students know local dialects and expressions.	2.91	0.75	High
10. The students understand traditional social practices.	3.02	0.63	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 12 indicates that Grade 8 students of Lucena City exhibit a high level of appreciation for cultural practices, with an overall mean score of 3.12, interpreted as "High." It suggests that culture remains vibrant and relevant to young people. Their familiarity with traditional games and pastimes (3.49) is particularly notable—nearing the "Very High" category—indicating that these community-oriented activities remain a powerful medium for transmitting cultural values and fostering social bonds across generations.

Strong recognition of traditional foods and delicacies (3.39) and the ability to identify festivals and their significance (3.13) further confirm that the younger generation remains deeply connected to the sensory and celebratory aspects of their heritage. Lucena City is known for iconic dishes such as chami—a sweet and spicy noodle dish made from fresh miki noodles stir-fried with pork, chicken, liver, shrimp, and vegetables—and tinapa (smoked fish). Chami is celebrated annually through the Chami Festival, which features cooking competitions and community feasts (Merano, 2021). Meanwhile, tinapa is Lucena City's One Town, One Product (OTOP) and is a staple of its culinary identity (Otoridoz, 2023).

On the other hand, familiarity with local dialects and expressions (2.91) and knowledge of traditional social practices (3.02) scored relatively lower, though still within the "High" range. This slight gap reflects the vulnerability of intangible cultural heritage—especially language—amid globalization. As Du (2023) notes, indigenous languages are at risk of extinction, even though language serves as a vessel for history, humor, wisdom, and worldview.

Overall, the findings highlight the resilience of Lucena City's cultural fabric despite modernization pressures. Students' responses reveal that cultural appreciation is not merely inherited but actively lived. From culinary traditions to festive celebrations, local practices remain dynamic and integral to community identity. The recognition of cultural preservation as essential (3.05) suggests that young people are not passive recipients of tradition but potential advocates for its survival. To sustain this momentum, it is vital to integrate local cultural education into the school curriculum, strengthen community-led heritage initiatives, and encourage intergenerational learning to deepen students' appreciation for their linguistic and social heritage.

*Table 13. Respondents' Level of Appreciation as to Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students value Lucena City's cultural festivals and traditions.	3.49	0.55	High
2. The students take pride in our unique cultural practices.	3.34	0.64	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
3. The students support youth involvement in cultural preservation.	3.42	0.57	High
4. The students feel responsible for protecting local cultures.	3.16	0.61	High
5. The students are eager to share their cultural heritage.	3.10	0.65	High
6. The students respect traditional customs and values.	3.57	0.53	Very High
7. The students appreciate local artisans and craftspeople.	3.30	0.55	High
8. The students advocate cultural heritage protection.	3.03	0.75	High
9. The students embrace cultural diversity in our community.	3.32	0.56	High
10. The students actively participate in cultural activities.	3.13	0.71	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 13 shows that Grade 8 students of Lucena City demonstrate a strong appreciation for their cultural heritage, with an overall mean score of 3.29, classified as "High." This high level of appreciation indicates that students not only value their traditions but also recognize their role in preserving and promoting them.

The highest-rated item—respecting traditional customs and values (3.57)—was interpreted as "Very High," emphasizing that respect for heritage is deeply ingrained and serves as the ethical foundation of students' cultural identity. Respect for tradition reinforces the authenticity of artistic practice, ensuring that customs are observed with sincerity and wisdom.

Other highly rated aspects include valuing cultural festivals and traditions (3.49), supporting youth involvement in cultural preservation (3.42), and taking pride in unique cultural practices (3.34). These results suggest that students are not passive observers but active participants who see cultural heritage as a source of pride and identity—an essential factor in sustaining cultural vitality across generations (Stephenson, 2023).

However, scores related to advocating for heritage protection (3.03), participating in cultural activities (3.13), and sharing cultural heritage (3.10) were slightly lower, suggesting that while students value culture, they may be less proactive in promoting it beyond their immediate circles. Encouraging participation in cultural showcases, storytelling events, and community performances could transform students from custodians into active ambassadors of their heritage.

Their openness to cultural diversity in the community (3.32) reflects a readiness to engage in cultural exchange while maintaining pride in their identity—an essential trait in an increasingly interconnected world.

In summary, the youth of Lucena City are proud, respectful, and appreciative of their cultural traditions, but there is room to encourage greater outward advocacy and participation. Strengthening opportunities for active cultural engagement can help ensure that heritage appreciation translates into sustained preservation and promotion.

*Table 14. Respondents' Level of Appreciation as to Engagement with Local Cultural Heritage*

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students attend local festivals and cultural events.	3.29	0.65	High
2. The students visit museums and cultural sites regularly.	2.74	0.77	High
3. The students join school-based cultural activities.	3.09	0.69	High
4. The students participate in cultural preservation efforts.	3.04	0.62	High
5. The students share cultural knowledge with others.	3.22	0.61	High
6. The students learn traditional arts and crafts.	3.02	0.72	High

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
7. The students document local cultural practices.	2.75	0.70	High
8. The students support local cultural organizations.	3.19	0.59	High
9. The students practice traditional performing arts.	2.89	0.74	High
10. The students collect and preserve cultural efforts.	2.84	0.73	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

The results in Table 14 indicate that Grade 8 students in Lucena City have a high and significant level of engagement with their local cultural heritage, as reflected by an overall mean of 3.01, interpreted as "High." Among the listed activities, attending local festivals and cultural events obtained the highest mean score (3.29), showing that festivals remain an essential means of enhancing cultural appreciation among the youth.

It is well exemplified by the Pasayahan Festival of Lucena City—a festive two-week celebration held in the town proper that showcases local culture, music, food (such as chami and tinapa), and arts. The Pasayahan Festival draws thousands of residents and tourists from surrounding towns, especially during the peak celebration days (Estrellado, 2023). Such large turnouts highlight the strong cultural identity and sense of community that festivals instill among the populace. They also underscore the crucial role of festive activities in fostering cultural pride and unity.

Furthermore, students' active participation in events like the Pandong Contest, Street Fashion Show, Grand Parade, and Flores de Mayo confirms the survey findings. It illustrates how community celebrations serve as powerful vehicles for intergenerational cultural transmission. Through participation in these heritage festivals, students do more than observe—they become integral contributors, ensuring the continued preservation and promotion of Lucena City's rich cultural heritage.

High levels of participation were also recorded in activities such as sharing cultural knowledge with others (3.22), supporting local cultural organizations (3.19), and joining school-based cultural activities (3.09). These findings suggest that students are not only enjoying cultural experiences but are also

beginning to take active roles in passing on and promoting their community's heritage.

However, involvement in more structured and long-term cultural conservation activities—such as visiting museums and cultural sites (2.74), documenting local customs and practices (2.75), and collecting or preserving cultural artifacts (2.84)—was comparatively lower. Although these still fall within the "High" category, the difference suggests a gap between participation in festive activities and sustained commitment to heritage conservation. It implies that while students enjoy socially rich cultural events, they are less consistently engaged in efforts requiring regular participation and a preservation-focused mindset.

Addressing this gap is essential. As Estrellado (2024) points out, projects such as the relocation and restoration of Museo de Lucena are timely interventions that can make cultural institutions more accessible, engaging, and relevant to young people. Such efforts ensure that cultural appreciation extends beyond celebrations to encompass the preservation and documentation of heritage for future generations.

The study underscores that while students display genuine appreciation for cultural heritage, there is an urgent need to strengthen their involvement in long-term conservation. Integrating cultural heritage topics more deeply into school curricula, encouraging active documentation projects, and creating youth-centered cultural programs are key strategies. Aligning these efforts with UNESCO's (2024) initiative to mainstream culture and arts in education will not only deepen students' Connection to their heritage but also help nurture a generation of cultural stewards who see preserving culture as both a personal identity and a shared responsibility.

Table 15. Respondents' Level of Appreciation as to the Value of Local Cultural Heritage

Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The students believe cultural heritage shapes our identity.	3.06	0.68	High
2. The students recognize culture's role in community unity.	3.02	0.60	High
3. The students value heritage preservation for development.	3.20	0.56	High
4. The students consider cultural education essential.	3.38	0.60	High
5. The students see heritage's influence on daily life.	3.10	0.59	High
6. The students appreciate the heritage's economic value.	3.18	0.48	High
7. The students understand the role of culture in tourism.	2.97	0.64	High
8. The students recognize heritage in modern innovation.	2.95	0.70	High
9. The students value the strength of cultural diversity.	3.17	0.59	High
10. The students see heritage as a future foundation.	3.13	0.61	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Table 15 shows that Grade 8 students in Lucena City exhibit a high level of appreciation for the value of local cultural heritage, with an overall mean score of 3.12, interpreted as "High." It reflects a clear awareness among the youth of the importance of cultural heritage in multiple aspects of life.

The highest-rated statement was the belief that cultural education is essential (3.38), indicating that students view learning about culture as vital to identity formation, civic engagement, and personal growth. Similarly, high scores were observed for valuing heritage preservation for development (3.20) and recognizing heritage's economic value (3.18). These perspectives show that students regard cultural heritage not only as symbolic but also as a driver of community progress and economic opportunity—an outlook particularly relevant in today's rapidly changing world.

Students also acknowledged the strength of cultural diversity (3.17) and saw heritage as a foundation for the future (3.13). These results suggest that students view heritage as a living,

evolving resource capable of inspiring innovation and strengthening community resilience.

However, lower scores were recorded for recognizing heritage's role in modern innovation (2.95) and understanding its importance in tourism (2.97). It implies that while students appreciate heritage in traditional contexts, they may be less aware of how it can influence contemporary industries such as creative enterprises, entrepreneurship, and tourism—fields where cultural assets can contribute significantly to sustainable development.

The findings indicate that although students have a firm grasp of cultural heritage as a traditional and developmental value, further work is needed to expand their understanding of its relevance to modern society and the global economy. As the Editorial (2024) emphasizes, integrating cultural heritage education more intensively into school curricula can inspire students to become not only well-informed about the past but also creative custodians of the future.

Table 16. Summary of Perceived Level of Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage

Types	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Knowledge of Cultural Practices	3.12	0.68	High
Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage	3.29	0.61	High

Types	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Engagement with Local Cultural Heritage	3.01	0.68	High
Value of Local Cultural Heritage	3.12	0.61	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** 4.00-3.50 Very High, 3.49-2.50 High, 2.49-1.50 Low, 1.49-1.0 Very Low

Figures in Table 16 reveal an overall "High" level of appreciation for local cultural heritage, as evidenced by the collective mean of 3.13. Among the four dimensions, Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage ranked highest (3.29), indicating that respondents hold strong positive attitudes toward and deep emotional connections with cultural heritage. Knowledge of Cultural Practices and Value of Local Cultural Heritage each had mean scores of 3.12, suggesting that respondents recognize both the importance of artistic practices and their role in society. Engagement with Local Cultural

Heritage had the lowest mean score (3.01), showing that while students appreciate heritage, their active participation may be relatively lower.

Overall, the findings point to a strong respect for local cultural heritage but also suggest the need for greater participatory involvement. It aligns with the study by Tabuena et al. (2022), which found that respondents with high awareness of Philippine culture and arts also exhibited high appreciation, reinforcing the importance of awareness as a driver of cultural engagement.

*Table 17. Correlation Between Level of Historical Consciousness and Level of Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage*

Historical Consciousness	Level of Students' Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage			
	Knowledge of Cultural Practices	Engagement with Local Cultural Heritage	Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage	Value of Cultural Heritage
	r-value	r-value	r-value	r-value
Knowledge of Local History	.614**	.549**	.394**	.451**
Understanding of Local Context	.602**	.518**	.445**	.563**
Critical Thinking Skills in History	.565**	.516**	.379**	.521**
Connection to the Past	.475**	.361**	.418**	.244**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 17 presents the correlation between students' historical consciousness and their appreciation of local cultural heritage. All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating strong relationships between the variables. It supports the primary objective of the study: to determine whether students' levels of historical consciousness—measured through knowledge of local history, understanding of local context, critical thinking skills in history, and connection to the past—are meaningfully associated with their appreciation of local cultural heritage, which includes knowledge of artistic practices, engagement, attitudes, and values.

Among all the dimensions of historical consciousness, Knowledge of Local History showed the strongest correlations across the appreciation factors. It correlated most highly with Knowledge of Cultural Practices (.614\*\*) and Engagement with Local Cultural Heritage (.549\*\*), suggesting that students with a solid grasp of local historical accounts are more likely to identify and appreciate the cultural traditions embedded in their communities. It aligns with the study's aim to examine how fact-based historical understanding fosters cultural pride and identity.

Similarly, Understanding of Local Context was strongly associated with appreciation

factors such as Knowledge of Cultural Practices (.602\*\*) and Value of Cultural Heritage (.563\*\*). It implies that when students can situate past events within their socio-geographic and cultural contexts, their appreciation of heritage deepens. They do not merely learn historical facts—they also understand the relevance and interconnectedness of these events with their current cultural landscape.

Critical Thinking Skills in History also displayed high correlations, particularly with Knowledge of Cultural Practices (.565\*\*) and Value of Cultural Heritage (.521\*\*). This finding suggests that students who are taught to analyze, question, and interpret historical sources develop a more reflective and nuanced appreciation of cultural heritage. Such cognitive skills enable them to engage with history beyond superficial memorization, fostering deeper cultural insight.

Conversely, the connection to the past dimension—reflecting students' emotional or personal attachment to local history—had the lowest correlations among the dimensions, though still significant. The weakest relationship was observed between Value of Cultural Heritage and Connection to the Past (.244\*\*). It suggests that while emotional attachment plays a role in cultural appreciation, it is less influential than historical knowledge, contextual understanding, and analytical thinking. In other words, personal nostalgia or family ties may spark interest, but they must be reinforced by rigorous historical education to produce meaningful appreciation.

Overall, these findings reinforce the idea that historical consciousness significantly shapes how students value and engage with their local cultural heritage. They also highlight that cognitive and analytical factors—particularly knowledge and critical engagement—have a greater impact than purely affective ones.

From an educational perspective, schools should go beyond simple recitation of historical facts and focus on experiential, inquiry-based, and context-rich learning strategies. Such strategies could include heritage site visits, interviews with local elders, local history research projects, and debates on historical issues. These approaches not only enhance students'

knowledge but also cultivate a deeper, more enduring appreciation of their cultural identity.

It is consistent with Gaddi et al. (2024), who found that students at St. Paul University Surigao demonstrated high awareness and appreciation of their Surigaonon cultural heritage, showing that senior high school students can achieve high cultural appreciation when historical consciousness is prioritized. Conversely, Santos (2021) found that students in Pampanga possessed minimal knowledge of their local history and relied primarily on school activities to foster cultural appreciation. That study also revealed no significant link between historical knowledge and heritage appreciation, underscoring the need for more innovative and engaging methods to integrate local history into classroom instruction, making it both practical and meaningful.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, there was a significant positive relationship between the levels of historical consciousness and appreciation of local cultural heritage among Grade 8 students in Lucena City; thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. It implied that students who were more knowledgeable, critically engaged, and emotionally connected to their local history tended to demonstrate greater appreciation and involvement in preserving cultural heritage.

For learning practices, these results highlighted the importance of integrating place-based and culturally relevant pedagogy into the curriculum. Embedding local history in classroom discussions, using experiential learning strategies such as heritage site visits, and engaging students in oral history projects could deepen their sense of identity and civic responsibility. Teachers were encouraged to adopt inquiry-based activities that developed critical thinking skills in history, allowing students to connect past events with contemporary issues. Moreover, collaboration with local historians, cultural groups, and community elders could provide authentic learning experiences that reinforced historical consciousness.

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