Folktales as a Creative Lab:

A Participatory Design-based Digital Storytelling Model to Develop Creative Potential.

Creativity is our ability to look at a problem and come up with an ideal solution. It has nothing to do with the subject, the job or what we learn. In the Sri Lankan education systems creativity is nurtured but not at a suitable level. It is more suitable to mention in that way rather than mentioning creativity is not fully nurtured. Creativity should be accessible to all, since everyone is creative. It is full of optimism, hope and the joy of changing things by making the truth come true. With the arrival of digital technology, children have ever-increasing opportunities for knowledge gathering and study. It encourages students to open up their creative abilities to share and build continuous relationships through their creativity. Therefore, students actively participate in the process by taking responsibilities, working with the organisation, and experimenting and developing unique proposals for solutions. This project adopts the participatory design approach which is a design methodol-

Figure 1: Students participating in the participatory activity.

ogy in which the potential users of a design participate as co-creators in the design process, as a framework to develop a digital storytelling model and reflect how students express their creativity. In this process, students' thoughts are interpreted using active participatory approaches such as illustration, photography, audio recording, writing, and drawing. This process involves creating a story based on students' creative abilities and forcing students to act and make decisions to solve their creative problems. Participants use participatory approaches to analyse and synthesise stories through creative abilities.

In this project, the students are encouraged to interact with their grandparents and parents to listen to folktales and develop a digital storytelling-based activity model to create their own digital stories. The folktale has evolved with time for generations due to its dynamic quality. A participatory action was designed to identify how students can understand this quality of the story and interpret it through digital space to reveal their creativity. With the learnings from these activities, a mobile application was developed to sustain the designs, and nurture collaboration via digital storytelling processes that develop creative thinking as a practice. The project aims to determine how participatory planning approaches within the framework of digital storytelling reveal students' creativity in design-based application processes. With that, development of the mobile application will sustain this framework model. The participants of the study were selected from the secondary education system. The criteria -sampling method, which is the process of selecting a representative group
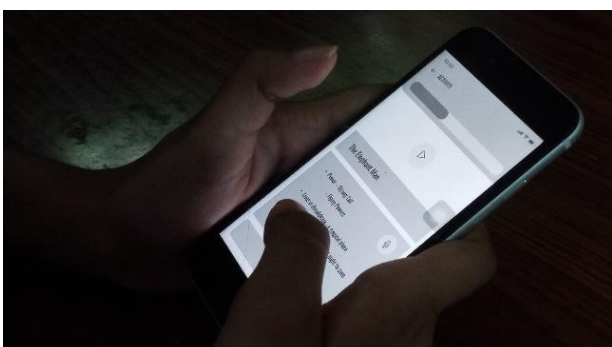
from the population to be studied, was used to determine the participants' active participation in creative development based on their own digital stories, heroes, and character creation. The students indicated their visual explanations and views throughout the design process. The data obtained at the end of the study design process was analysed according to the visual research methodology, focusing on image analysis and content analysis.

Research findings showed that an application in which students actively participate following their expectations and interests not only reveals their creativity, but also helps them discover the joy of learning. In addition, the effective use of the digital storytelling approach motivated the students' educational experience to be more effective.

Figure 2: Application prototype user testing
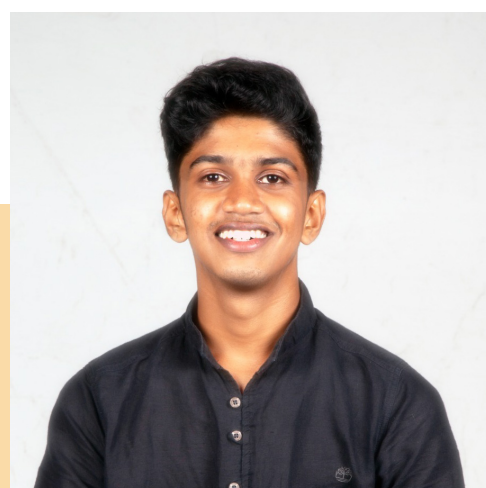
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