



Sustainability Literacy through Japanese Folktales: A Pathway to New Humanism

Udara I. de Silva and Samanthika Lokugamage

Department of Modern Languages, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, International Center for Multidisciplinary Studies, Department of Languages, Cultural Studies & Performing Arts, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka.

Article Info

Article History:

Received 14 Sep 2024

Accepted 14 Aug 2025

Issue Published Online

01 July 2025

Key Words:

Folktales

Human Factors

New-Humanism

Storytelling

Sustainability-Literacy

*Corresponding author

E-mail address:

udaradesilva@kln.ac.lk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8196-7621>

Journal homepage:

<http://journals.sjp.ac.lk/index.php/vjhss>

<http://doi.org/10.31357/fhss/vjhss.v10i02.14>

VJHSS (2025), Vol. 10 (02),
pp. 195-204

ISSN 1391-1937/ISSN
2651-0367 (Online)

©Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences 2025

ABSTRACT

The '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' calls its member states to strive for a sustainable future. A fundamental approach to achieving this objective is advocating 'sustainability literacy'. Resorting to human interventions: sustainability human factors' which encompass beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors as opposed to non-human interventions is of prime importance in this process. Folktales are a classic carrier of these human factors from one generation to another. Although the importance of storytelling and folktales is well demonstrated in extant literature, studies conducted in a Sri Lankan perspective, focusing on Japanese folktales have been sparse. Hence, this study brings into limelight, the potential of Japanese folktales in promoting sustainability literacy. The versatile nature of folktales to be reproduced into other popular forms like anime, their resemblance to Sri Lankan Jathaka katha justifies the significance of this study. Adopting a qualitative approach, 16 Japanese folktales adapted into Sinhala are subjected to thematic analysis which yielded 5 major themes: T1: Values, T2: References to Buddhism, T3: Beliefs, T4: Fantasy, and T5: Historical references with several sub-themes under them. Traits of characters and moral lessons of the stories illustrate exemplary societal ideals, and the stories are creatively reimagined by disseminating warmth, hope, human touch, care and taste to advocate sustainability human factors. Going beyond the traditional boundaries of 'new humanism', we extend its definition by showing how these factors are embedded into the lives of the modern man by relating the stories in an appropriate and innovative language, narrative style and through the incorporation of fanciful, novel, and original illustrations.

1. Introduction

The United Nations General Assembly in 2015 adopted the '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', calling on member states to strive for a peaceful and prosperous future for all people and the planet. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focus on areas such as environmental sustainability, universal education, ending hunger, and empowering women. Central to achieving these goals is the promotion of 'sustainability literacy', which is 'the knowledge, skills and mindsets that allow individuals to become deeply committed to building a sustainable future and assisting in making informed and effective decisions' (SDG Knowledge Platform, 2015). Stimulating 'sustainability literacy' involves equipping individuals with the knowledge, behaviors and attitudes needed to actively contribute to building a sustainable future and make informed decisions. In essence, sustainability literacy is about raising awareness and implementing practical strategies to achieve sustainability and is directly connected with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) which is a channel for reaching other SDGs. Therefore, advocating sustainability literacy paves way to achieving a more sustainable society in terms of broader SDGs; economic development, environmental sustainability and social inclusion in the long run.

Recent advancements in sustainability have primarily focused on non-human interventions like Artificial Intelligence (AI) which have begun to replace human involvement. However, given the multifaceted and complex nature, achieving sustainability requires more than just non-human interventions. Lumberrars et al. (2021) argue that social and human factors, such as beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors also known as 'sustainability human factors' are essential for achieving a sustainable future. Folktales in any society play a crucial role in transmitting a wealth of wisdom: beliefs, values, attitudes, and

behaviors, from one generation to the next. Hence, they have the potential to propagate these human factors to individuals. In this study, focusing specifically on Japanese folktales (*mukashibanashi*), our aim is to find out their role in promoting sustainability literacy by conveying and disseminating valuable insights on attitudes, beliefs, and values through generations.

Storytelling is an art which narrates experiences, traditions, and culture of ancestors using language, vocalism and gestures replicating the scenes of an event (Chung, 2006). Moreover, storytelling is effective in disseminating complex and challenging concepts regardless of the skill levels of individuals since stories are highly comprehensible (Nurbaya & Sutrisnowati, 2025). Being one of the oldest forms of teaching which allows human generations to share cultural knowledge (Landrum et al., 2019), it promotes all four skills in communication: reading, writing, listening and speaking (Mokhtar et al., 2011). As such, a plethora of research has demonstrated that storytelling is an effective means of promoting awareness regarding sustainability aspects since it unites past and present, integrates disparate knowledge bases, and shapes our perception of the world and our relationships in it (Miller, 2010). In this study, we focus on 'folktales' as a highly representative and popular form of storytelling. Although the definition of a 'folktale' is widely argued upon, and a consensus is not arrived at, we resort to Lindahl (2004)'s definition. Lindahl (2004), applies the term to 'any traditional tale, whether its tellers consider it true or false, or both' including 'belief tales, personal experience stories, and accounts of major historical events' (Lindahl, 2004: pp. xlvii). Folktales have a well-established influence and validity since they elicit stronger reactions in both adults and children than any other type of communication (Bennett, 2013; Fischer et al., 2020; Lumberrars et al., 2021; Miller, 2010; Tasnim et al., 2023). According to Tasnim et al. (2023), folktales frequently

touch on the interconnected social, economic, and environmental facets of sustainability. They contend that many facets of traditional civilizations and their wisdom are the source of the idea of sustainability. For this reason, folktales serve as a useful tool in aiding our understanding of intricate and multidimensional sustainability principles. The retelling element, simplicity, the wealth of wisdom folktales carries, make them easily reproducible into other forms like novels, drama, story books and popular forms such as anime (Japanese animations) and manga (Japanese comics) which are relatable to modern audiences. This potential increases how well they can encourage sustainability literacy in a modern, contemporary world. Their dynamic nature is demonstrated by numerous folktales from Japanese culture influencing popular Japanese anime because of its fanciful aspects, entertainment value, and overall 'coolness'. Renowned animator Hayao Miyazaki has a distinctive style of crafting new fantasy from more universal and classic materials, frequently referencing traditional Japanese tales and customs in his films (Kano, 2005). In addition to captivating audiences with their entrancing tales, these folktales also transmit traditional cultural wisdom and deeper truths that have been transmitted down the ages in human history demonstrating the twin laws folktale as a form of folklore is governed by: 'dynamism' and 'conservatism' (Toelken, 1996).

Research has been done on the effects of folktales on children's moral, ethical, and cognitive development (Mello, 2001); their effectiveness as a teaching and learning tool (Bellet & Dala, 2010; Bennet, 2013; Hofman-Bergholm, 2022; Thompson, 2023); an effective instructional strategy elevating student learning performance and motivation (Hung et al., 2012), and their contribution to sustainable education and sustainability promotion (Fischer et al., 2020; Molthan-Hill et al., 2020; Tasnim & Hossain, 2021). Nonetheless, little research has been done in Sri Lanka in relation to the role of Japanese folktales translated or adopted into Sinhala in

supporting promotion of sustainability literacy. This work attempts to close that gap in the body of literature by making two contributions. First, using qualitative analysis, it pinpoints the sustainable human factors found in 16 selected Japanese folktales. Subsequently, it will demonstrate how these sustainable human aspects have been inculcated in the stories to propagate sustainability literacy in a rapidly changing, modern world.

There were two reasons for choosing to center this study on Japanese folktales. They share moral and ethical concerns with the Sinhala *Jathaka katha* (stories of Buddha's previous births as Bodhisattva relating virtues and moral lessons), which make them relatable to the Sri Lankan audience in the first place. Furthermore, both cultures exhibit striking similarities in their shared social characteristics and ideals, such as an agrarian lifestyle and the significance of teamwork in accomplishing shared objectives. The influence of Buddhism is also another important commonality between the two cultures. This cross-cultural dialogue emphasizes how societies are interconnected and how folktales become a global storytelling medium.

2. Materials and Methods

This work expands on an earlier initiative that involved adapting 16 Japanese folktales into Sinhala and publishing the book 'Ekamath eka kaleka Japan rate' (Once upon a Time in the Land Called Japan: Senarathna et al., 2024). The 16 folktales in this qualitative study are subjected to thematic analysis. "Identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" is the process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79). According to Vaismoradi (2013: 400), it is regarded as a qualitative descriptive method that gives researchers the fundamental abilities needed for diverse types of qualitative analysis. The data analysis process started in line with Braun &

Clarke (2006): reading and rereading the stories to familiarise with the data while making notes on preliminary ideas, methodically coding important elements from each of the 16 stories, and compiling codes. Until each subject and subtheme found in the stories had distinct definitions and titles, this iterative procedure was carried out repeatedly until the saturation point was reached and the codes seemed representative of the data adequately.

3. Results and Discussion

The thematic analysis process revealed five themes that bring together a comprehensive picture of the data: T1: Values, T2: References to Buddhism, T3: Beliefs, T4: Fantasy, and T5: Historical references. Table 1 categorizes the major themes, and their subthemes are present in the 16 stories. The following section discusses them in detail.

T1 'Values' has the greatest number of subthemes (9 subthemes) out of the five themes that were developed from coding. Exemplary societal ideals that convey a message, either directly or indirectly, make up each of the subthemes. The moral lesson of

the tale and the traits of individuals serve to introduce and clarify these ideals. Even though the characters in the stories are from bygone eras, they occasionally have similar life circumstances to those in the present, indicating that human nature has not altered despite advances in science and technology. For example, Jiro, the protagonist of the narrative 'Muhude wathura lunu rasa wuna hetu' (Umi no mizu ha naze shiokarainoka), is gentle and unselfish who shares with others whatever meagre supplies he has, whereas his older brother Ichiro is harsh and self-centered. Jiro's goodness is rewarded when he gets a magical mortar from an unidentified elderly man that fulfills whatever he wishes for. But out of envy, Ichiro takes the mortar and, when he can't manage it properly, meets a tragic end. This story emphasizes multiple sub-themes, such as the value of selflessness (ST1.7), unity (ST1.8), the idea that good deeds are rewarded and wicked deeds are punished (ST1.2), and the significance of generosity and sharing (ST1.1) as inherent traits of ancient communities. Regretfully, conflicts arising from greed and selfishness have grown commonplace in today's world, ranging from interpersonal and communal disagreements to global problems.

Table 1. Major Themes and Subthemes

Major Themes	Subthemes
T1 Values	ST1.1 : Goodness of generosity and sharing
	ST1.2 : Rewards for good and punishment for evil
	ST1.3 : Apt wisdom and wisdom of old generations
	ST1.4 : Consequences of comparison
	ST1.5 : Modesty is simplicity
	ST1.6 : Humble lifestyle lived close to nature
	ST1.7 : Selflessness
	ST1.8 : Unity
	ST1.9 : Equality
T2 References to Buddhism	ST2.1 : Respect for Buddhist priests
	ST2.2 : <i>Karma</i> and <i>Karma Phala</i>
	ST2.3 : Reincarnation
T3 Beliefs	ST3.1 : Gods
	ST3.2 : Power of nature over humans
	ST3.3 : Origin of famous place names

T4 Fantasy	ST4.1 : Divine, demonic and magical creatures
	ST4.2 : Children with magical birth and supernatural powers
	ST4.3 : Magical elements
T5 Historical References	ST5.1 : Historical Events
	ST5.2 : Famous People

The stories, such as those found in Jathaka katha, teach moral lessons making it easy to appeal to a Sri Lankan audience. In the story 'Bosath pilima wahanseta bata thoppi' (Kasajizo), elderly grandfather selflessly offers his only earnings for the day: bamboo hats, including the one he is wearing, to the Jizo statues out of respect. The statues come to life and visit the grandfather's house to pay tribute bringing essential goods which the couple was in dire need of. This tale, blending fantasy elements, highlights the importance of selflessness and the fact that good deeds are rewarded (ST1.7 and ST1.2). In 'Kappa ge wesi yadinna' (Kappa no amagoi), a mythical creature; kappa sacrifices its life to bring rain to a village. Apart from the three stories elaborated above, ST 1.2 'rewards for good deeds and punishment for evil' is the most frequent sub theme that emerged through the analysis and were found in the following stories: Siyage kammule gediya (Kobutorijisan), Eka pawulaka thun denek (Sannin kyoudai), Thengu ge maya kabaya (Tengu no kakuremino), Momotaro (Momotaro), Horageth hora (Dorobo no dorobo) and Kanguya kumariya (Kaguyahime). Hayao Miyazaki's renowned animated film 'My Neighbor Totoro' also explores the theme of good deeds being rewarded, incorporating the Japanese belief in Jizo bodhisathwa watching over children. By creatively reimagining these stories, Miyazaki makes them relevant to modern society, embodying a form of 'new humanism' which is an attempt to recapture and revisit the moral quality of the past civilizations. Introducing these narratives to different cultures allows revisiting and reconsidering the virtues found in our own folktales and jathaka katha. Furthermore, ST 1.3: 'apt

wisdom and wisdom of old generations' demonstrate that no matter how times change, wisdom of our ancestors are extremely simple and practical even in a scientifically and technologically advanced modern era. Old mother in 'Wedihiti kanda' (Ubasuteyama) who was supposed to be abandoned in a lonely, faraway mountain once turned 60 years old, as stipulated by a state law, since they are a burden to the state, saves the state from losing its sovereignty to a more powerful ruler by giving wise solutions to a series of difficult problems that no one was able to solve. In the story 'Hakumaijo hewath sudu sahal maligawa' (Hakumaijo), rulers and citizens in the kingdom act in a clever and sustainable way to distract and chase away the invaders. Ikkyusan, in the story 'Mi pani muttiya wahawuna hati' (Ikkyusan), is extremely intelligent for his age and provides solutions to multiple problems that come his way instilling a sense of admiration for his wisdom in a humorous way. 'Kawuda usama' (Yama no seikurabe), 'Muhude wathura lunu rasa wuna hati' (Umi no mizu ha naze shiokarainoka) and 'Siyage kammule gediya' (Kobutorijisan) showcase the consequences of comparison (ST 1.4) and wanting to obtain what others have without earning those by yourself. Characters in 'Eka pawulaka thundenek' (Sannin kyodai), 'Bosath pilima wahanseta bata thoppi' (Kasajizo), Kanguya kumariya (Kaguyahime) illustrate positive pictures of the value of a humble lifestyle lived close to nature (ST 1.6) and that modesty is simplicity (ST 1.5). Livelihoods maintained by preserving the natural environment, being satisfied with what you earn and what you have are testimonial to a sustainable lifestyle. Notions of 'equality' (ST

1.9) are disseminated in 'Kawuda usama' (Yama no seikurabe) where the high mountains all over Japan are contesting to find out who has the highest peak, whereas the highest peak which is the Suruga Fuji (current Mount Fuji) is not the least bothered and rather questions the purpose of such a competition. This story also draws a picture of 'consequences of comparison' (ST 1.4) where the shorter mountain who originally challenged other higher mountains to take part in the competition, is defeated.

T2 'References to Buddhism' shed light on ancient Japan and its religious background. While mainstream Buddhism in Japan does not typically focus on concepts like Karma, Karma phala (ST 2.2) and reincarnation (ST 2.3), a closer examination of certain stories reveals similarities to Buddhist beliefs in Sri Lanka. In the tale of 'Kappa ge wesi yadinna' (Kappa no amagoi), the mythical creature kappa longs for a better afterlife and seeks guidance from a Buddhist priest on how to achieve it. The priest advises kappa to perform good deeds in order to ensure a positive Karmic outcome. In the end, kappa sacrifices himself to help the villagers in their quest for rain, demonstrating a belief in reincarnation and the importance of selfless actions. The young man in 'Karanavemi nariya' (Kamisorigitsune), who believes he killed an innocent woman, asks a priest for advice on how to escape his negative Karma. These two stories along with 'Bosath pilima wahanseta bata thoppi' (Kasajizo) illustrate how Buddhism and Buddhist priests were respected (ST 2.1) by ordinary people and mythical creatures.

T3 'Beliefs' in the framework of modern humanism are directly related to human considerations and sustainability. Many stories, like 'Eka pawulaka thundenek' (Sanninkyodai), graphically depict the overwhelming influence of nature on humans, demonstrating the might of nature over humanity (ST 3.2). In Kame's village, people hack down trees all year round even though they need firewood only in the winter.

Kame's older brother Matsukichi eventually pays with his life for putting money above protecting the environment. Matsukichi has a sizable firewood company and urges locals to provide fuel all year round. On the other hand, Kame's noble gesture of planting trees prevents a devastating landslide from taking many lives in her village. In 'Kappa ge wesi yadinna' (Kappa no amagoi), people turn to rituals and communal prayers in desperation for rain where they believe in the God for rain (ST 3.1). Since the strength of nature will always outweigh human potential, these tales serve as a helpful reminder of the significance of fostering environmental sustainability and living in harmony with the natural world as human capacity will always be subordinate to the power of nature.

The theme of 'Fantasy' (T4) and magical elements (ST 4.3) are found in nearly every story that was analysed. These stories feature divine, demonic and magical creatures (ST 4.1), children born from trees and fruits having supernatural powers (ST 4.2), and magical elements such as a princess born to a bamboo plant who grows rapidly, and the bamboo cutter (consequently her father on earth) finds gold in a bamboo grove (Kanguya kumariya; Kaguyahime). Characters like Momotaro, born from a peach, and Tengu in 'Tengu ge maya kabaya' (Tengu no kakuremino), who possesses a magical overcoat of invisibility, showcase bravery and extraordinary powers. The fear of demons and their impact on everyday life is also a common theme in these stories, as seen in 'Seeya ge kammule gediya' (Kobutorijisan) and 'Aruma puduma li pathuru thuna' (Sanmai no ofuda). Additionally, in 'Karanawemi nariya' (Kamisorigitsune), a fox with magical powers punishes humans for their actions. The folktales refer to 'historical places' (ST 5.1) and 'famous people' (ST 5.2) which together constitutes T5. 'Hakumaijo hewath sudu sahal maligawa' (Hakumaijo) demonstrates how the palace got its name, while 'Kanguya kumariya' (Kaguyahime) showcases both references to famous places and people, narrating how Mount Fuji was

named after a historical incident. In this story, the emperor commands his attendants to dispose of correspondences from Princess Kanguya and the magical concoction of youthfulness and eternal life which she passed onto him, in a mountain that is closest to the Moon, which is Princess Kanguya's original birthplace to which she eventually returned. The story relates the incident where hundreds of Samurai climbing the mountain to fulfil his command. According to this narrative, the Kanji that stands for the word 'Fuji 富 + 士' (Mount Fuji) means 'many+warriors', testifying to the origin of its name.

In-depth analysis shows that the stories demonstrate multiple 'sustainability human factors' encompassing beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors which are essential for promoting sustainability literacy: that is the knowledge, behaviors and attitudes needed for making informed decisions in building a sustainable future. We contend that these human factors revisited in a relatable way for modern audiences are none other than a 'new humanism' which we will expand on in the latter part of this paper. The term 'new humanism' originally refers to a critical movement in the United States that was predominantly prevalent from 1910 to 1930. It is based on the literary and social theories of the English poet and critic Matthew Arnold who postulated the importance of recapturing the moral quality of past civilizations to create an ideal of the good man and of the good society (Davis, 1968) in an age of industrialization, materialism and relativism. The ability to relate them to diverse audiences in an appropriate language that captures the reader despite age, gender and knowledge disparities, and the ability to adapt them into multiple modes like novels, drama, *anime*, *manga*, and picture stories ¹ that are

embraced by modern generations is another example of folktales being agents of new humanism. Characters from folktales emerge as mascots and popular personalities (i.e., totoro, kappa) in TV shows etc. and are called elements of 'cool Japan', portraying their dynamism. On the other hand, their inherent characteristics and the values they propagate, transmit traditional values, beliefs and attitudes to modern generations, thus instilling a 'new humanism'. Accordingly, in this study, we attempt to extend the definition of 'new humanism' by showing how Japanese folktales transcend boundaries and are retold to various audiences (in this instance to a Sri Lankan audience) disseminating human qualities of warmth, hope, human touch and taste into the lives of the modern man who has lost himself in a materialistic world. We posit that the 'new humanism' in this instance relates to the language, the narrative style and appropriate, innovative illustrations used in the adapted work enabling modern generations to engage and connect with the text in new ways. In order to pass down wisdom and cultural knowledge of bygone generations, an extremely simple and colloquial language which is appropriate for storytelling is used as opposed to the classic written variety². With an insight into introducing and blending Japanese cultural elements authentically into the story, we provided an introduction for such words and concepts at the beginning of the work so that footnotes and endnotes do not disturb the flow of the story (refer Figure 1). The narrative style utilized is simple with plentiful conversations supporting natural flow of the story. Furthermore, the use of original color illustrations that are fanciful and rendered in a modern style like those found in popular Japanese anime and manga, is another important and appealing way that connects modern readership with the story (refer Figure 2, 3, 4, 5).

¹ "Ekamath eka kaleka Japan rate...." carries original pictorial illustrations.

² Sinhala is a diglossic language with a distinct written variety and a spoken variety.

කතන්දර කියවන්නට කලින්....

ලෝක සාහිත්‍යය තුළ ජන කතා, පුරාණ කතාවලට හිමිවන්නේ අද්විතීය ස්ථානයකි. විවිධ රටවල ජනකතා කියවන්නට ලබුන් පමණක් නොව, වැඩිහිටියෝද එක සේ රුචිකත්වයක් දක්වති. “එකමන් එක කාලෙක ජපන් රටේ....” යනු විවිධ ජනකතාවලට තෝතැන්නක් වන ජපානයේ ජන කතා ගොන්නෙන් තෝරාගත් ජනකතා කිහිපයකි. මෙම කෘතියෙන් විවිධ ප්‍රස්තුත, අවස්ථා අලෙළා මුඛ පරම්පරාගතව පැවතගෙන ආ කතා දහසයක් පාඨක ඔබ වෙත තිළිණ කරමු. ජපන් සංස්කෘතියටම ආවේණික වූ ඇතැම් වචන හා සංකල්ප, ඔබගේ රස වින්දනයට බාධාවක් නොවන ආකාරයට සම්ප කරවීම සඳහා පහත හැඳින්වීම ඉදිරිපත් කරන්නෙමු.

Figure 1. Introduction to Cultural Words



Figure 2. One of the original illustrations (Story: Kappa no amagoi)



Figure 3. Illustration in the current work (Story: Kappa ge wesi yadinna)



Figure 4. One of the original illustrations (Story: Kobutorijisan)



Figure 5. Illustration in the current work (Story: Siyage kammule gediya)

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

After analyzing 16 stories, the study discovered that they all share clear-cut themes and plain narratives, much like classic folktales. Primary themes that emerged from the data were 'Values', 'References to Buddhism', 'Beliefs', 'Fantasy', and 'Historical References', each of which had several subthemes. They are concepts that are not new nor uncommon to the world today. These Japanese folktales convey significant social lessons in an understandable, direct, and simple way—a quality that is lost in the complex world of today. The scenarios we experience today too are non-other than causes of human activities resulting in complex outcomes. However, today's society is governed by rules, conventions, and laws, that push each individual into a solitary corner far from humanism. Direct and genuine guidance by a warm source is becoming rather uncommon. Folktales can positively influence the moral, ethical, and cognitive development of future generations by being shared and passed down through storytelling. They can also support sustainability literacy and play a part in sustainable education with a new humanism focused on a search for values. A new sense of humanism can be successfully communicated to the current generation by using techniques like adaptations into story books, animation and manga that convey old values in a new approach. However, this study is not without its limitations. The analysis was limited to 16 Japanese folktales adapted into Sinhala. Adding more stories into the analysis would have provided grounds to generalize our findings. Therefore, future research may focus on more folktales in their studies.

5. References

Belet, S. D., & Dala, S. (2010). The use of storytelling to develop the primary school students' critical reading skill: the primary education pre-service teachers'

opinions. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, pp. 1830-1834.

Bennett, E. M. (2013). Storytelling and the moral tradition: An examination of the pedagogy of storytelling for moral enculturation. In L. H. Robert Fisher, *The many facets of storytelling* (pp. 13-21). Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press.

Bird Miller, M. (2010). Storytelling for Sustainability. *Ometeca*.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), pp.77-101.

Chung, S. K. (2006). Digital storytelling in integrated arts education. *The International Journal of Arts Education*, 4(1), pp.33-63.

Davis, D. (1968). The naturalistic humanism of Matthew Arnold: A critical reinterpretation of his imaginative vision. The University of Oklohoma.

Fischer, D., Selm, H., Sundermann, A., & Storksdieck, M. (2020). Storytelling for sustainability: A definition and its implications for education and communication. In *Storytelling for Sustainability in Higher Education* (pp. 38-51). Routledge.

Hofman-Bergholm, M. (2022). Storytelling as an educational tool in sustainable education. *Sustainability*, 14(5), 2946.

Hung, C. M., Hwang, G. J., & Huang, I. (2012). A project-based digital storytelling approach for improving students' learning motivation, problem-solving competence and learning achievement. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 15(4), pp. 368-379.

Kano, S. (2005). Japanese folklore and Hayao Miyazaki's works. *Monthly Kanko* 10, Japan Tourism Association.

- Landrum, R. E., Brakke, K., & McCarthy, M. A. (2019). The pedagogical power of storytelling. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 5(3), 247.
- Lindahl, C. (2004). *American Folktales: From the Collections of The Library of New York*: M.E. Sharpe.
- Lumbreras, S., Oviedo, L., & Angel, H. F. (2021). The missing piece in sustainability indices: accounting for the human factor. *Sustainability*, 13(21), 11796.
- Mello, R. (2001). Building Bridges: How Storytelling Influences Teacher/Student Relationships.
- Mokhtar, N. H., Halim, M. F. A., & Kamarulzaman, S. Z. S. (2011). The effectiveness of storytelling in enhancing communicative skills. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 18, pp. 163-169.
- Molthan-Hill, P., Luna, H., Wall, T., Puntha, H., & Baden, D. (Eds.). (2020). *Storytelling for sustainability in higher education: an educator's handbook*. Routledge.
- Nurbaya, S. S. (2025). Folklore as an Honest Character Education Media to Achieve Quality Education in Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Lifestyle and SDGs Review*, 5(2): e04695-e04695.
- Senarathna, I., de Silva, U.I., Lokugamage, S., Gunawardhena, S.A. (2024). *Ekamath eka kaleka Japan rate*. Samayawardhena, Colombo.
- Slaven, A. N. (2012). The Japanimated folktale: Analysis concerning the use and adaptation of folktale characteristics in anime.
- Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform(2015)*. (2025, March 11). Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdaction/hesi/literacy>
- Tasnim, S., & Hossain, A. (2021). Folk values for beginners: A sustainability perspective from Bangladesh. *International Journal of Information Systems and Social Change (IJISSC)*, 12(1), pp. 1-11.
- Tasnim, S., Hossain, A., Marinova, D. (2023). How Can Stories in Primary Education Support Sustainable Development in Bangladesh? Sustainability, 15,12620. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151612620>
- Thompson, C. How does Storytelling in Early Childhood Education Help your Child's Development. Available online: <https://www.youngacademics.com.au/how-does-storytelling-in-early-childhood-education-help-your-childrens-development/> (accessed on 10.03.2025).
- Toelken, B. (1996). *Dynamics of folklore*. University Press of Colorado.
- Vaismoradi, M. T. (2013). Qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing Health Science*, 15, pp. 398-405.