

# A Systematic Review: Entrepreneurship Education for Kindergarten Children in Malaysia

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## Abstract

Based on the Covid-19 situation, UNESCO in 2020 had launched the Sustainable Development Goal 4 programme via Education 2030 with a focus on education development beginning in early childhood education. The needs and challenge analysis for Entrepreneurship Education for Children were based on the information available in the Systematic Checklist protocol. The criteria for this study included (i) analysing studies from 2016 to 2021, (ii) identifying the needs in Kindergarten Entrepreneurship Education, and (iii) studying the challenges in Kindergarten Entrepreneurship Education. The findings showed that the educators and entrepreneurs should understand that Kindergarten Entrepreneurship Education could be made more attractive and effective. Additionally, the implementation of Entrepreneurship Education could provide more awareness to the parents, community, and stakeholders about the needs of the current generation in ensuring the nation's economic well-being based on the ideas in Transformasi Nasional 2050.

**Keywords:** Systematic Review, Entrepreneurship Education, Kindergarten, Children.

## Introduction

Education for children has been affected due to the current pandemic situation caused by the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 or more known as COVID-19 which struck globally. Some aspects which have not been focused on in teaching and learning (PDPC) are the implementation of entrepreneurship education which should be conducted during early childhood education. In 2020, UNESCO had launched the Sustainable Development Goal 4 programme via Education 2030 with a focus on education development beginning in early childhood education especially for poor families for the purpose of life survival. Teachers are encouraged to include elements inherent in Elemen Merentas Kurikulum (EMK), which is value-added as it contains 10 elements. One of the elements is the Entrepreneurship element

which helps to develop the entrepreneurship characteristics features and practices so that it is inculcated among the children.

As Stated in Financial Education Network (2019), the Main Strategy would be to develop good values among the children in the Malaysia action plan by expanding the basic elements of financial knowledge in the school curriculum from the pre-school, primary school and secondary school levels which can strengthen the children's financial education through co-curriculum activities. This is indirectly related to the basic needs of entrepreneurship education which should be inculcated at every level of education. According to Armanurah (2014); Rosmani & Aishah (2018), previous studies indicated that the entrepreneurial attitude in everyone would lead them towards the intention of becoming successful and working diligently. As such, there should be a new platform for emphasising the entrepreneurial education in developing the entrepreneurial element among the kindergarten children.

There are 6 main thrusts in Kurikulum Standard Prasekolah Kebangsaan (KSPK). One of them is the Science and Technology thrust which is aimed towards inculcating financial literacy (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2017). The thrust also covers one knowledge discipline which is Early Mathematics and the content standard on financial values is focused on in the children's learning. The activities involving children's financial basics provide exposure and information about the aspects of money management and daily expenditure. However, the current education system should also focus on the development of future careers. Education based on children's early entrepreneurship basics has been found to fulfil this requirement specifically, whereby the focus is on social involvement, and it is developed with more focus on children's specific skills. The suitable teaching approach for financial education should be integrated into the education system so that children become more skilled and efficient in financial matters in the future (Fazli & Nira, 2018). The basic entrepreneurial elements which could be emphasised should be suitable with the children's level such as financial knowledge, savings and budget, readiness for facing unexpected matters, introduction to money, and financial savings' needs and wants (Financial Capability and Inclusion Demand Side Survey, 2018).

### **Literature Review**

Children's career in the future would be difficult to be predicted during the current COVID 19 situation in Malaysia. Thus, a special action plan related to the development of education for children focusing on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects should be emphasised by all parties to create a balanced educational requirement to fit in the new norms. The National Financial Literacy Strategy (2019-2023) which was implemented before the pandemic had provided useful guidance to the educators, parents, and stakeholders in developing a more exciting financial literacy education for Malaysians. This program acts as a comprehensive action plan in providing awareness about financial literacy (Financial Education Network, 2019). For children who are financial literate, they would be provided with knowledge, awareness, skills, attitude, and habits which would help them to make financial decisions wisely.

Whether the Covid-19 situation would affect the future of children or otherwise, an educational transformation plan which is suitable with the new norms should be given attention by involving high educational level and skills which are fun (Jufri & Wirawan, 2018). The development of current teaching and learning using the elements of creativity and innovation, higher order thinking skills (KBAT) and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering

and Mathematics) are some of the learning processes which have been the focus of Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan (2013-2025) in the 21st century (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2018). However, in terms of the aspects of preparation for the children's education and skills towards viable career prospects, the inculcation of entrepreneurial and financial elements using the main support system in education at the early childhood level would involve the role of the family using the assimilation of the latest practices and traditional culture (Inanna et al., 2020).

In a study by Cheng et al (2020), on the teaching of business since the early years, the authors had involved respondents who were descendants of Chinese immigrants from China in the early 1960s. The study found that the success of these respondents as successful entrepreneurs was due to the way the children were brought up by the families through their proactive business involvement. The basics of entrepreneurship should be inculcated in every child especially for the B40 children since they were young through the knowledge of the management of money and expenditure through business activities which are suitable according to their age level. Children should be exposed to basics of entrepreneurship from various sources such as reading, formal education, learning by playing activities which would ensure that they would be able to become independent of manage their finances well when they become adults later (Inanna et al., 2020). These practices require high-level diligence and discipline to be implemented to highlight the qualities of leadership, competitiveness, ability to make decisions and the knowledge to manage finances to ensure that their effectiveness as entrepreneurs could be intensified. These abilities should be nurtured using the element of play related to entrepreneurship so that they could grow along with a helpful environment (Fazli & Nira, 2018). Thus, it is important to create an environment which could help the development of B40 children in entrepreneurship.

According to Halim & Ann (2016), developing child entrepreneurs should be a useful activity in applying life based on real experiential experience. The government's effort through Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2018) and Wawasan Kemakmuran Bersama 2030 (Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ekonomi, 2019) which focus on the sustainability aspect of the preparation for a prosperous life in the future as the young generation are the main practitioners who need to be prepared for a more challenging working world. Competency in financial management is one of the important components to be mastered by the young generation to ensure that they can become smart financial managers when they are older (Inanna et al., 2020; Adilla, 2015). Regardless of age, every individual should have the knowledge and skills about the way to manage finances using various mediums such as reading, formal education or informal education to ensure that the children can work independently and manage their finances well when they grow up (Jufri & Wirawan, 2018). As such, the experience and knowledge of basic finance acquired in early childhood could provide an impact on the young person's entrepreneur practices in the future.

### **Methodology**

According to Aromataris & Pearson (2014) in a study by Chia et al (2021), a systematic review generally is a method used to answer specific questions to acquire the evidence of a study by collecting data critically, evaluating a research study and synthesizing a study. The systematic review is formed to provide a complete summary of current evidence related to the research question. As stated by Higgins & Green (2011), a systematic review should provide reliable results when the conclusion is made. As such, the use of a systematic review is the most

suitable method to fulfill the requirement of answering the research question. Therefore, when the research questions had been fixed, the next step to be made was to look for the related studies. The relevant search for information was made using the Google Scholar and Scopus Database search engines by limiting the years from 2016 to 2021. The keywords used in the search included children's entrepreneurial education, early childhood entrepreneurship, financial knowledge. After the filtering process, only 15 articles were acquired, and these were the studies related to the research questions in this study.

Table 1

*Description of 15 related studies which are matched with Entrepreneurial Education for Kindergarten Children in Malaysia.*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Number of respondents/participants</b>
<b>Amran &amp; Abu Seman</b>	Quantitative	302
<b>Yaacob &amp; Salki</b>	Quantitative	120
<b>LeBaron et al</b>	Mixed Methods	Not stated
<b>Ramos et al</b>	Quantitative	150
<b>Zaki et al</b>	Quantitative	109
<b>Putri &amp; Henriyudanta</b>	Qualitative	Not stated
<b>Henager &amp; Cude</b>	Quantitative	500
<b>Te'eni-Harari</b>	Quantitative	103
<b>Williams et al</b>	Qualitative	36
<b>Agnew</b>	Quantitative	1247
<b>Tezel</b>	Quantitative	Not stated
<b>Yilmaz &amp; Hamza</b>	Not stated	Not stated
<b>Suhaimee et al</b>	Survey method	344
<b>Bassi</b>	Case study	Not stated
<b>Hassi</b>	Not stated	Not stated

### Findings and Discussion

The focus in Transformasi Nasional 2050 is for Malaysia to become the most advanced nation in economic, social and innovation development. This is in line with the action plan outlined in Pelan Tindakan Usahawan in local universities from 2016-2020 which stated that there were two main aspects which could be focused on in the effort to make Malaysia as an advanced nation, which were education and entrepreneurship. However, entrepreneurial education has only been emphasised in secondary level education or at the university level. The entrepreneurial education at the kindergarten level should be inculcated to develop a future generation which could emulate the entrepreneurial element. To ensure that the entrepreneurial education is effective, the related parties should be responsible for ensuring that the children take part actively in the teaching and learning process which involve entrepreneurship (Selman & Hamza, 2021). Additionally, entrepreneurial education not only provides new skills to the children, but it also ensures that the children understand the applications and acquire knowledge to make them confident and knowledgeable in entrepreneurial education (Selman & Hamza, 2021).

The findings from the literature review indicated the Entrepreneurship for Kindergarten Children in Malaysia has not been emphasised by the relevant parties. Most of them have only focused on secondary school children or university students. Thus, this section will discuss more on (i) the analysis of articles published between 2016 and 2021, (ii) identify the needs of Entrepreneurship Education for Kindergarten Children and (iii) assessing the challenges of Entrepreneurship Education for Kindergarten children.

### *Published Articles*

In the systematic review related to the Entrepreneurship Education for Kindergarten children in Malaysia, a few articles had been identified and utilised in this study from 2016-2021. Research is important for supporting the views that entrepreneurship education should start at school and should be consistently repeated when they get older (Selman & Hamza, 2021). Entrepreneurship education should be a part of the school curriculum to ensure that learning is continuous and could be inculcated in the children. As stated by Yusof & Sapiyah (2008) the school is the earliest place for developing children's personality in entrepreneurship education (Zulaikha & Aslinda, 2021). Thus, entrepreneurship education could ensure the future of the children in making them individuals who can read, understand, and assess all information related to finances (Selman & Hamza, 2021).

Zulnaidi & Kamil (2018) stated that using formal and informal learning, financial knowledge could be accessed while entrepreneurial skills could be obtained through practical exposure or real-life experience. Therefore, entrepreneurship education should be developed at schools for all age levels from early childhood to secondary school. As stated by Putri & Muhammad (2021), children should be exposed to entrepreneurship education as soon as possible more specifically. However, from the search made, most of the studies focused more on entrepreneurship education for secondary school and university levels only. There is still a lack of studies or exposure on the usage or application of entrepreneurship education at the kindergarten level.

### *The Needs for Entrepreneurship Education*

The awareness towards the formation of Elemen Merentas Kurikulum (EMK) could be counted as one of the contributions in the future. This is in line with Paco & Palinhas' view (2011) that entrepreneurship education is important and should be implemented since early childhood (Zahirah, 2021). At the kindergarten level which utilises KSPK, the entrepreneurship education can be implemented in every thrust. In KSPK, there are a few values inherent in EMK and entrepreneurship is one of the useful values for forming entrepreneurial characteristics and practices so that they become a part of the children's culture. Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2017) stated that there were a few entrepreneurial characteristics which could be inculcated through activities of through teaching and learning processes such as being diligent, honest, responsible, and able to develop a creative and innovative mind.

As stated by Thomas et al (2014), countries such as Canada, United States and the Phillipines have encouraged children to master the entrepreneurial element and promoted the entrepreneurial purpose and behaviour (Zahirah, 2021). This is vital for ensuring that children could build up their self-confidence and creativity based on the entrepreneurial elements.

As further stated by (Zahirah, 2021), the skills, abilities and attitudes are applied by inculcating the entrepreneurial element to train children to become creative, showing the courage to take risks and able to develop their abilities to work with others. The childhood

level is the best age for developing a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. Additionally, at this age, children can build their character, values, personalities such as being independent, confident, brave etc. They can develop their imagination, agility, cognitive and emotional through their creativity (Fadly et al., 2016). As such, parents and teachers should play their roles to help build the required characteristics in children (Lizza & Maesaroh, 2017).

To inculcate entrepreneurship education at the early childhood level or the kindergarten level, the children's interest should be encouraged to refine and enliven the entrepreneurial element. According to Ramos et al (2020), the more the child learns of entrepreneurship, the more he or she is aware that the field would take them closer to professional activity. Ishak et al (2011) indicated that entrepreneurial education would be focused on all groups of students from the early childhood level to the secondary school level (Amizan, 2017). The entrepreneurial element is one of the elements which could be learnt and can be taught or disseminated to others. The knowledge and skills learnt in entrepreneurial education could encourage the students in enlivening the entrepreneurial spirit in themselves (Olugbola, 2017). According to Manaf et al (2012), planning skills would be one of the entrepreneurship elements and encourage them to be successful (Zulnaldi & Kamil, 2018).

Some researchers suggested that entrepreneurial education should be applied in the early years. As such, this type of education is not only limited and offered at the university level but should also be inculcated at the primary school level for the purpose of exposing the young generation to the concept of entrepreneurship (Paço & Palinhas, 2011). This is supported by Abderrahman (2016) who stated that the teaching of entrepreneurship education to children and providing them adequate exposure could help to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in the children. Some examples of entrepreneurship education programmes which had been conducted as stated in a study by Williams et al (2020) titled "Enhancing financial literacy in children 5–12 years old using authentic learning within a school market garden programme" indicated that the programmes were conducted for the purpose of developing financial knowledge. The findings showed that the children who were involved in the programmes had a positive experience related to financial knowledge (entrepreneurship). This clearly showed that the entrepreneurial programmes had a positive impact in shaping the children's personality with the entrepreneurial element (Abderrahman, 2016) and as such, the entrepreneurship education should be considered as a consistent and continuous process from the kindergarten level to the secondary school level.

#### *Challenges in Entrepreneurship Education*

Entrepreneurship education should be implemented at the beginning level as kindergarten. The education should be inculcated in the children during the teaching and learning process. Thus, teachers are the most significant individuals in helping to develop the entrepreneurship element in the children. The teacher's readiness is vital in applying entrepreneurship education at the kindergarten level. According to Jaggil & Suhaimi (2018), the individual's belief about the suitability of support and the values inherent in a particular change represent teacher readiness and Izham & Noraini (2007) stated that teacher readiness could be seen based on the teacher's attributes from various aspects such as knowledge and attitude towards a particular field (Zahirah, 2021). According to Sarah & Mastura (2018), a good lesson could be taught if the teacher had the readiness to integrate entrepreneurial thinking. Additionally, the teacher's skills also presented some challenges in implementing entrepreneurship education. In other words, this skill could be classified as a variety of



techniques which could be utilised according to the suitability of the lesson. As such, the delivery of a practical entrepreneurship education requires a teacher who has the skills in activity or programme implementation. To make changes or innovation in daily teaching methods, the teacher should have new ideas (Neto et al., 2019). Most teachers seem to lack understanding of the definition of entrepreneurship, and they think that the definition is only focused on business or companies; however, if it is focused in detail, it has a deeper meaning. The features of entrepreneurship such as design and innovation of a method or product, willingness to take risks, able to add value to something all provide definitions to entrepreneurship (Ihsana, 2017). This is in line with the entrepreneurship context which would help to develop oneself towards the characteristics of entrepreneurship such as having the initiative and wisdom to decide.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, the entrepreneurship education should be applied at all education levels especially to the kindergarten children. The inculcation of entrepreneurial elements is important for developing the entrepreneurial features and practices as a culture among the children. Some of the features which could be inculcated in teaching and learning (PDPC) are activities which could inculcate values such as being diligent, honest, and responsible and developing the creative and innovative mind for creating ideas for the market. Based on Christianti et al (2015), the values are important to be implanted at an early age to produce the next generation who are independent, responsible, concerned with environment, unyielding, honest, confident, appreciative, able work together and discipline. The findings based on the systematic review showed that the educators and entrepreneurs should understand that the Entrepreneurship Education for Kindergarten Children could be made more attractive and effective. As such, the stakeholders should implement entrepreneurship education so that the entrepreneurial values could be inculcated as early as possible in the children's personalities. Additionally, the implementation of Entrepreneurship Education could provide awareness to the parents, community, and stakeholders about the needs of the current generation in ensuring the nation's economic well-being based on the ideas in Transformasi Nasional 2050.

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