





Article

Developing Entrepreneurial Society: Have We Ignored the Opportunities of Preschool Education?

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Abstract: Entrepreneurship education has much potential to act as the main driver for society, which promotes well-being, economic sustainability, and solving global wicked challenges, such as climate change. Thus, education strategies and political programs emphasize that entrepreneurship education or strengthening entrepreneurs' activities should occur through the educational system. However, entrepreneurship education has its roots in adult education or teaching older students. In addition, the field reflects a business orientation, making it difficult for the theme to be integrated into education for young children. In this paper, we study "How has entrepreneurship education been studied in the preschool context?". This study utilizes a semi-structural literature review which was conducted in the fall of 2022. This approach allows for a better understanding of complex areas within a given research topic, such as studying entrepreneurship education in the context of preschool education. Eleven peer-reviewed studies were included in the analysis. The articles were coded deductively and inductively using a concept-centric approach. The results show the potential of entrepreneurship education to be utilized more in educating young children if we want to develop societies more ambitiously. In general, more research is needed in the field. Furthermore, there is a need to study what happens in entrepreneurship education preschool interventions and what results can be achieved. Our research can also contribute to preparing educational strategies and developing curricula, providing ideas to early childhood educators.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education; entrepreneurial learning; entrepreneurial society; preschool education



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1. Introduction

Education holds big expectations for making the world a better place to live in [1] and for individuals to find their place [2]. Recent history clearly shows improvements in knowledge capital are possible and within the reach of nations. However, achieving progress is not an easy task. Nonetheless, the world provides substantial evidence that schools can significantly enhance the achievements of children and students. However, in the presence of measures of cognitive skills, school attainment does not even have a significant independent relationship with growth [3].

Thus, practitioners and researchers have also found that entrepreneurial education has affordances that can empower the individual to be an active participant in society and to inculcate competencies to deal with the complex challenges that the world faces [4,5]. Entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship education is about more than creating an economy in societies. The latest GEM [6] points toward entrepreneurship, and also refers to entrepreneurship and innovative education as having the potential to act as a main driver for

society, which promotes well-being, economic sustainability, and solving global wicked problems [7] such as climate change. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this approach has become more evident than ever before. Through entrepreneurship education, we have many opportunities to solve upcoming crises. However, it is important to remember that we may create new opportunities that we do not yet understand through entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education.

Understanding the concept of ‘entrepreneurship’ is fundamental for defining entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship has had many meanings and foci during various times and within different contexts [8]. Present-day entrepreneurship reflects the characteristics of individual, self-oriented behavior manifested in the creation, management, and ownership of a small enterprise. In addition, entrepreneurship depends on particular opportunities, the processes of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation, and the mindset of individuals who discover, evaluate, and exploit them [9]. Entrepreneurship subsumes a wide range of beliefs. Some believe that entrepreneurship must refer to risk-taking individuals who start new innovative, fast-growing ventures; others may limit the notion to initiating new ventures [8]. For younger learners and children, an emphasis on entrepreneurship education may be appropriate; it teaches learners to take more responsibility for themselves and their learning, to try to achieve their goals, to be creative, to discover opportunities, and, in general, to cope more successfully in a complex society [10,11]. Learning entrepreneurial behavior from an early age can therefore be incorporated into the curriculum through implementing designed programs and activities that involve leaders, teachers, children, and parents of children. Entrepreneurship education cultivated at a young age is more about non-cognitive entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurship education in early childhood is not usually taught based on a particular material but on entrepreneurial activities that consider the characteristics of early childhood [12]. Thus, we must be aware that a clear conceptual framework in the field has not been presented despite these descriptions of entrepreneurship education in preschool education.

However, preschool education, in principle, has a privileged position because of its nature of enhancing, e.g., creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. This angle has not always necessarily been recognized because the traditional teaching of entrepreneurship has often started from learning aimed at older learners. On the other hand, the latest GEM (2022) [6] emphasizes that developing entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mindset is a matter of psychological factors, such as the fear of failure, e.g., starting a business and continuing it. What if we support learners even more strongly at an early stage in being entrepreneurial and taking risks without fear of failure? Nonetheless, childhood is the preferred period to plant entrepreneurial seeds, nurture positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship, and acquire basic knowledge on the topic [13].

On the other hand, we still clarify the use of concepts in this study. Hägg and Kurczewska (2021) [14] provide a comparative analysis of different views on entrepreneurial education, focusing on two interrelated approaches that define the field. Known as ‘enterprise education schools’ and ‘entrepreneurship education schools,’ these approaches differ in their goals and scope. According to the authors, an “enterprising education school” aims to develop enterprising individuals and enhance organizational flexibility and adaptability, while an “entrepreneurship education school” focuses on the start-up process and curriculum development. Although they have distinct emphases, the research findings from both approaches have contributed to the overall development of the field without contradicting each other. Thus, Kurczewska (2021) [14] adopted the term “entrepreneurial education” to emphasize the integrated nature of the field, while acknowledging the prevalence of terms such as “entrepreneurship education” and “enterprising education” in the literature. The intention is to present a holistic perspective of the field, rather than emphasizing divisions or engaging in a detailed comparison of the two approaches. Even though we use the concept of entrepreneurship education in our research, we are aware of the differences behind the use of the concept. Country differences also play a significant role in the prevalence and implementation of entrepreneurship education or its related concepts. Like Kurczewska

(2021) [14], we do not see a confrontation in the use of concepts, even though our main concept in this study is entrepreneurship education to enhance entrepreneurial society.

Furthermore, as Ladeveze and Canal (2016) [15] argue, we also point out three main approaches approaching entrepreneurship education: the economic, which focuses mainly on the process of creation of companies in entrepreneurship; the psychological, which deals primarily with the personal characteristics and cognitive processes of the individual; and the didactic, which seeks to adapt entrepreneurship education to the nature of the recipient, because a school child, a college student or a post-graduate—are the same. They are not opposites, but converge to be applied to the educational point of view.

As a matter of fact, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial thinking, and actions should be promoted at all levels of education according to, for example, OECD strategic documents (e.g., [16]). Thus, education policymakers have widely understood the potential of these themes. But is entrepreneurship education firmly rooted only in the education of older learners in practice? There is no straightforward answer to this question. This type of activity can be promoted even if we do not explicitly use the concepts in question. Thus, it is important to acknowledge, for example, that preschool practitioners and researchers use a somewhat different vocabulary about pedagogy than in older levels of schooling. For example, the Nordic countries have common values in their educational policies involving democracy, caring, and competence which are guiding lights in early childhood education [17]. Democracy forms a foundation for pedagogical practices where children's participation and influence are crucial. Care is connected to fulfilling children's basic needs, learning, and development. Children's social competencies are highly valued and refer to the children's interaction and cooperation, participation in society, empathy, solidarity, and understanding of different perspectives. The policy documents emphasize children's learning through play, creativity, and expression [17]. However, they do not usually include the vocabulary that indicates the importance of entrepreneurship in early childhood education. Thus, one could assume that entrepreneurial thinking and activities are still taught to children, at least implicitly, also at the preschool level.

On the other hand, we also have other challenges studying entrepreneurship education. Despite our awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship education from a global policy perspective, it is still being determined if the desired outcomes can be achieved and whether policy maneuvers can make any difference at all. Prior research on entrepreneurship education and its outcomes have highlighted the role of entrepreneurship education in affecting the learners' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, their motivation, and intentions in engaging in new ventures (e.g., [13,18–20]). Despite the deep interest in entrepreneurial capacity building, there still needs to be a consensus on the distinctive elements of entrepreneurship as a competence. Furthermore, solid research on the outcomes of entrepreneurship education is scarce [20,21]. Also, it tends to severely under-describe the actual pedagogies being tested. Even though there is no “proof” of the outcomes and implemented pedagogy, on a policy level, there is still a widespread belief that entrepreneurship education offers an efficient and cost-effective means of increasing the amount and quality of entrepreneurs in the economy [22]. In addition, entrepreneurship education contributes to developing other essential skills appreciated by future employers, such as problem-solving, innovation, and team skills [23,24]. Therefore, we could also assume that our research topic is relevant at the preschool level if we aim for these challenging and vast societal changes.

Thus, more knowledge is needed to enhance entrepreneurship education at different levels, such as preschools. Therefore, we argue that our approach of focusing on preschool education helps us to understand better and create an overall picture of how entrepreneurship education with different educational forums, target groups, and educational philosophical and pedagogical perspectives can further enhance the understanding and development of entrepreneurship education from a more comprehensive perspective. Human thinking and behavior is a holistic process not limited to a particular age, level of education, or formal or non-formal education.

However, as researchers of entrepreneurship education, we have noticed that the development in the preschool context is not much mentioned. For example, we became aware of the matter initially by looking at a significant education conference in the field, The European Educational Research Association conference (EERA), from which, in 2021–2022, there were five presentations related to entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial activities in higher education institutions. One presentation was related to vocational training. In addition, three presentations were found related to general education. There were no presentations with the angle of entrepreneurship education at the preschool level of education (or early childhood education). Since our topic is interdisciplinary, integrating, for example, the research of business and management, we searched for information related to some business conferences. However, conference presentations or abstracts were not presented, for example, on the ICSB (International Conference of Small Business), or the European Summer University Network on Entrepreneurship conference websites. Thus, these preliminary outcomes raised our interest in designing our study.

For this reason, we want to find out if entrepreneurship education has been studied in the preschool context, and if so, where and how. As we mentioned above, the promotion of entrepreneurship education in preschool education has a lot of possibilities, even considering that the preschool level already has elements typical of entrepreneurial pedagogy. This is possibly even such an educational income angle that these opportunities should be more utilized to promote entrepreneurial societies in more ambitious ways.

To clarify, we mainly use the concept of entrepreneurship education instead of entrepreneurial education, even though entrepreneurship education is often focused on the practical aspects of starting and managing a business, while sometimes entrepreneurial education has a broader focus, emphasizing the development of an entrepreneurial mindset that can be applied in different settings. However, it is important to note that these terms are often used interchangeably, and the specific meanings may vary depending on the situation and the institution or program providing the education. Thus, as previously explained, we see entrepreneurship education from a broader perspective in this study. Entrepreneurship education is about developing behaviors, skills, activities, and attributes that are applied both individually and collectively to enhance individuals and organizations of all kinds to create, master, enjoy, change, and innovate (e.g., [20]). Furthermore, when discussing developing human thinking and learning, we refer to concepts such as entrepreneurial thinking and learning in our research. We also chose the preschool context for our research context for the following reasons. Preschool education typically caters to children ages 3–5 years, and it serves as an introductory phase before formal schooling begins, as “primary education” has a more structured and formal approach. Furthermore, the concept of “early childhood education” should be narrower for our research since it would cover childhood from birth. However, we also know that in the study of preschool and its entrepreneurship education in the global context, details and practices may vary across different countries and educational systems.

Furthermore, preschool and pre-primary school are phrases that are frequently used interchangeably to refer to educational institutions or programs that educate children with early childhood education before they begin formal schooling. While nomenclature and practices change between countries and educational systems, there are certain distinctions between preschool and pre-primary school. The key distinction is based on the age group as well as the level of organization and academic concentration. Preschool is mainly for children aged 3 to 5, and it focuses on creating a play-based, developmental environment. Pre-primary school, on the other hand, typically caters to children in the year or two before they start primary school, usually ages 4 to 6, and offers a more structured curriculum with an academic emphasis. (e.g., [25–27]). Since entrepreneurial behavior does not emphasize cognitive results and processes, it is natural to choose the concept of preschool education instead of the pre-primary education concept for our research to study entrepreneurship education in this age-level context. Thus, we estimate that it is valuable to produce valid research by focusing on essential concepts when studying the phenomenon.

This paper is structured as follows: Firstly, in the literature review, we open the understanding of what is entrepreneurship education in preschools, for example, what types of commonalities can be found in entrepreneurship education and preschool education and what further opportunities could be provided by strengthening entrepreneurship education in this context. Secondly, we present our research aim with methods based on systematic literature research, where we want to find out if entrepreneurship education has been researched at all in preschool education, and if it has been researched, what types of articles are found. Thirdly, we present the results and conclusions from the analysis. Lastly, we discuss the key findings and make suggestions for further research.

2. Entrepreneurship Education in Preschools

In recent years, international policy and practice in early childhood settings have embraced children's agency, democracy, and rights [17,28]. Emphasis has been on children's participation, decision-making, and having their voices heard [29,30]. Children have the right to be active members of their society, influencing their daily lives [31]. Research has affirmed the importance of listening to children's ideas and views for them to be able to influence their environment and support their agency [28,32,33]. Children have different views and ideas, so it is critical to use different approaches when listening to and actually hearing them [34]. According to Jeffrey and Craft (2004) [35], children should have many opportunities to ask questions, observe, solve problems, and discuss their ideas and thoughts. In that way, they can influence their learning processes and be creative and active social agents. These emphases are very much in the spirit of entrepreneurship education, supporting children to become active members of society and influence their environment. However, the concepts "entrepreneurial" or "entrepreneurship" may not be used directly.

Play is a key factor in early childhood education and is discussed in different curricula worldwide [36]. Children's play and learning have been recognized as inseparable. Play involves learning, and learning requires play [37]. Research has indicated that play is beneficial for children's development, creation of knowledge, social competencies, and construction of peer cultures [33,38]. Children learn essential life skills in play, including creativity, problem-solving, and empathy [39]. Children bring their knowledge and experiences to play, where they develop their curiosity and their ability to learn and participate in the preschool society. Play has been defined differently among researchers; however, many researchers have agreed that children's play is a creative, self-initiated activity led by children, often enjoyable, and involves social interactions [40–42]. Play can be seen as one of the avenues for entrepreneurship education with a focus on giving children opportunities to engage actively with challenges they find important and use their creativity as active agents [43]. However, children's participation in preschool education is much more than "just playing", although that in itself, as we clarified, helps to develop essential competencies needed in the world.

Thus, in the preschool context, the importance of pedagogy is particularly emphasized. However, the concept of pedagogy is multidimensional and can be viewed from different perspectives [44]. Firstly, there is pedagogy through interaction that focuses on children's well-being, sense of security, safety, and care. Secondly, there is pedagogy through scaffolding, where children's learning builds on their competencies and existing knowledge, supporting their participation. Thirdly, pedagogy through didactics refers to children's learning through communication and interaction with the teacher. Fourthly, pedagogy through expertise refers to how educators' beliefs, values, skills, and competencies support children's learning. Fifthly, pedagogy through future orientation focuses on new values, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility for oneself, the environment, and others [44].

Thus, if we have a closer look at the description of entrepreneurship education described previously and the purpose of preschool and its pedagogy, we can state that there are many similarities between them; in both entrepreneurship education and preschool education, the aim is for individuals to be able to cooperate with others, reflect on their

actions, develop solutions, be creative, and strive forward to a world where they can influence and act in a balanced way as active members of society.

Preschool education, like all education, is undeniably still being developed. In this context, the opportunity for entrepreneurship education has come up. According to Sarıkaya and Coşkun (2015) [45], it is essential to increase the quality of preschool practice by integrating new approaches to support children's learning, such as entrepreneurship education. Research has indicated that children can develop entrepreneurship knowledge and thinking through preschool play, developing their competencies and producing innovative solutions to social problems [45,46]. For example, Samad et al. (2021) [47] implemented a 'market day' activity to improve children's entrepreneurship learning in preschool. This activity is like a bazaar where children market products for their friends, teachers, or parents. Axelsson et al. (2015) [48] investigated what characterizes entrepreneurial learning in a preschool context. They found that entrepreneurial learning developed preschool teachers' educational discussions and influenced children's entrepreneurial skills, such as ongoing reflection, active participation, a meaningful learning situation, and a tolerant atmosphere. However, there has been an imbalance in research on entrepreneurship education regarding how important it is seen in different societies and education levels, mainly focusing on older learners (e.g., [47]). Therefore, in this study, we aim to explore further how entrepreneurship education has been studied in preschools and see if there are any other studies in the field than the research references mentioned.

To sum it up, through entrepreneurship education, we could have even more opportunities to educate societies holistically to enhance balanced economic and social well-being. Furthermore, by taking a closer look at different levels of education, we could have the most significant opportunities in developing entrepreneurial activities of populations. In general, by searching whether there are specific studies on how entrepreneurship education has been practiced at the preschool level, and, if so, what kind, we expect to gain new knowledge on what type of research in the field should be directed in the future. Therefore, we designed our research aim and methodology accordingly, which will be presented next.

3. Aim

The research aims to determine if entrepreneurship education has been studied in the preschool context, and if so, where and how.

4. Methodology

This study utilizes a semi-systematic literature review (instead, e.g., systematic literature review) since such a review can involve both a qualitative and quantitative analysis, and content analysis is also typically used in the context. Its potential is the ability to map a field of research, synthesize the state of knowledge, and further create an agenda for research. The semi-systematic is used for topics that have been conceptualized differently and studied by researchers from diverse disciplines, making a full systematic review impractical. Instead of reviewing every single article, a different strategy is developed. This approach has been employed to provide an overview of a topic, and track the topic developed across research traditions. The aim is to identify and understand relevant research approaches and synthesize them using meta-narratives. This approach allows for a better understanding of complex areas within a given research topic, such as studying entrepreneurship education in the context of preschool education. This kind of analysis can help detect themes or common issues within a specific research area or methodology, or identify components of a theoretical concept [49]. As Cohen et al. (2018) [50] argue, the generalizability of such single experiments (e.g., pilot studies with different methodologies) can be further extended through, e.g., multiple experiment strategies, which allows single pilot studies to contribute to the development of a growing pool of data for eventually achieving a wider generalizability of the key findings. This study is based on this type of incoming angle.

A semi-systematic literature review was undertaken in the fall of 2022 in line with the research aims outlined in the introduction. The following research question was posed:

- How has entrepreneurship education been studied in the preschool context?

According to the PRISMA guidelines, the search strings in the selection process should be described [51]. The literature search was conducted in the Scopus database. The search string was ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘early childhood’, ‘education’ and ‘entrepreneurship’, and ‘preschool’ and ‘education’. Only peer-reviewed papers were analyzed. This search rendered 40, 25, 36, and 22 articles, respectively. After reviewing the articles, the titles and abstracts were analyzed, and 36 articles related to all concepts were selected. Only research papers or other work published by a peer-review process were included. This meant that a number of articles that were articles in press and conference articles were excluded, as well as articles that were seen to be too far from the key concepts in focus. Therefore, the following attributes of the articles were analyzed to produce an initial categorization of articles and to decide whether an article was to be considered for further analysis: the aim of the article/research focus, language, theoretical contribution, research methods, and type of results (qualitative, quantitative). The research was only accepted for further analysis if it provided a concrete conceptual contribution to this study. This resulted in 11 articles.

Based on these criteria, 11 peer-reviewed studies were included in the analysis. Articles were coded deductively and inductively using a concept-centric approach [52] to analyze the key findings on early childhood education, early childhood, entrepreneurship, preschool, and preschool education. Thus, we created a basis for understanding how entrepreneurship education has been studied in the context of early childhood education and preschool. However, we are also aware that with a limited sample size and the absence of a clear conceptual framework, it is crucial to recognize potential biases and limitations in the research design.

To find evidence of “How has entrepreneurship education been studied in the preschool context?”, we searched the following issues on the papers: What kind of key concepts appear in the studies? What is the main focus of the research? Which disciplines is it grounded on (e.g., education, psychology, entrepreneurship)? What is the methodology? What are the results in brief? What are the ideas for future research?

5. Results

As previously explained, former studies on entrepreneurial learning and behavior have not explicitly covered the understanding of how entrepreneurship education has been studied in the context of preschool education. Therefore, we aimed to develop a summarized basis for an in-depth understanding of how preschool education manifests itself in entrepreneurship education research, or vice versa: how is entrepreneurship education reflected in preschool education research?

To find evidence on “How has entrepreneurship education been studied in the context of preschool education?”, we proceeded with the semi-systematic literature review on the earlier presented topics. The articles included are presented according to year, key concepts, and discipline, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Articles according to year, key concepts, and discipline.

Number	Reference	Journal	Year	Which Key Concepts Are Stressed (e.g., ‘Early Childhood’, ‘Early Childhood Education’, ‘Entrepreneurial Behaviour’, ‘Entrepreneurial Learning’, ‘Entrepreneurship Education’, and ‘Entrepreneurial Competencies’)?	Discipline
1	Abankina, I., and Filatova, L. [53]	Education Studies Moscow	2018	Preschool education, childcare, accessibility, accessibility mechanisms, private kindergartens, competition, choice of kindergarten, electronic queuing solutions.	Education, Economics
2	Kondracka-Szala, M., and Malinowska, J. [54]	New Educational Review	2017	Key competencies, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial, teacher training.	Education
3	Konobeeva, E. [55]	Education Studies Moscow	2012	No keywords provided.	Sociology, Economics
4	Lindström, L. [56]	International Educational Studies	2013	Children, preschool, citizenship, entrepreneurship, education.	Education
5	Maravé-Vivas, M., Salvador-Garcia, C., Capella-Peris, C., and Gil-Gómez, J. [57]	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	2021	Service-learning, higher education, social entrepreneurship, physical education, active methodology.	Education, Sports Education, Education, and Didactics
6	Marquis, G.S., Colecraft, E.K., Sakyi-Dawson, O., (...), Jensen, H.H., and Huff-Lonergan, E. [58]	Journal of Nutrition	2015	Animal source foods, diet, growth, nutrition education, preschool children.	Dietetics and Human Nutrition, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics
7	Ojala, M., Ekman Ladru, D., and Gustafson, K. [59]	Early Childhood Education Journal	2020	Parental preschool choice, ECEC, mobile preschools, children’s competencies, educational discourse, education for sustainable development (ESD).	Education, Child and Youth Studies, Law, Psychology, Social work
8	Radner, J.M., Ferrer, M.J.S., McMahon, D., Shankar, A.H., and Silver, K.L. [60]	Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences	2018	Early childhood development, scaling up social innovation, international development, program evaluation, implementation research.	Early Childhood Development, Public policy, governance, Health
9	Schoon, I., and Duckworth, K. [61]	Developmental Psychology	2012	Entrepreneurship, intergenerational, socioeconomic resources, competencies, social skills	Social sciences
10	Yılmaz, H., Tunçeli, H.İ., Yavuz, E.A., and Zembat, R. [62]	Journal of Pedagogical Research	2022	Teacher candidates, preschool education, self-efficacy beliefs, attitudes towards the profession, entrepreneurship.	Education
11	Yin, Y., Yang, L., and Liu, B. [63]	Frontiers in Psychology	2020	Entrepreneurial psychology, preschool education major, entrepreneurial intention, psychological quality, psychological support.	Education, Psychology

As illustrated in Table 1 above, the articles were published between 2012 and 2022. Key concepts were entrepreneurship, education, and preschool education, as well as entrepreneurial competencies and intentions. The disciplines involved were mainly Education as well as Psychology, Sociology, Health, and Economics. Four of these articles conceptually emphasize preschool education.

The articles were then considered in their entirety, and the conclusions of the field study were analyzed in order to study evidence for “How has entrepreneurship education been studied in the context of preschool education?”. Therefore, in summarizing and analyzing the results as a whole, we concentrated next on the following issues: How do the content and results of research in the field stand out? How is interdisciplinarity reflected in the studies? Are there any methodological emphases?

The articles were further studied in context, methodology, main results, and ideas for future research. These results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Articles according to country, main focus, methodology, summary, and ideas for future research.

Number	Reference	Country	The Main Focus of the Research	Methodology	The Short Summary of the Results	Ideas for the Future Research
1	Abankina, I., and Filatova, L. [53]	Russia	Explores the issues related to developing private entrepreneurship in the field of childcare education, and the regulation of legislative changes for increasing competition between private and municipal kindergarten.	Survey with parents (N = NA) based on 2014, 2015, and 2016 Monitoring of Education Markets and Organizations.	Attending kindergarten becomes a social standard regardless of the place of residence and family income. Kindergarten is impossible due to the insufficient development of preschool infrastructure.	Steps to reduce social tension; strengthen preschool education to support social well-being.
2	Kondracka-Szala, M., and Malinowska, J. [54]	Poland	Explores entrepreneurship as the key competence of the teachers of preschool and early childhood.	Online survey of head teachers at schools and kindergarten (N = 232) teachers in private and public institutions.	Recommendations for teacher training within the framework of education for entrepreneurship by indicating direction and necessary changes.	Call for in-depth research to prepare such a curriculum offer for teacher training that would correspond to the contemporary challenges.
3	Konobeeva, E. [55]	Russia	An analysis of private preschool education, its forms, and manifestations.	Interviews with owners and employees of home-based kindergartens (N = NA). Survey of practices applied in such organizations (N = NA).	The paper proves that home-based kindergartens are now much closer to civic initiatives than to social enterprises.	Future research into the problems retarding the development of this market includes the absence of legal regulations and municipal support, lack of public trust in home-based kindergartens, and the short life cycle of each individual enterprise.
4	Lindström, L. [56]	Sweden	Illuminates preschool teachers' perceptions of what children in preschools learn and what abilities they perceive that children can develop in preschool.	Questionnaire sent out to municipalities (N = 13) in the north of Sweden. Professionals and others working in preschool.	The relationship between entrepreneurial education and citizenship education is close and dependent on one another and can strengthen the development of an individual's skills for inclusion in society from a very early age.	Follow-up studies that would show whether children enrolled in preschools develop entrepreneurial skills and adopt an entrepreneurial approach in the long term, as well as a longitudinal perspective, could be helpful in deepening young citizens' perception of their being citizens.
5	Maravé-Vivas, M., Salvador-García, C., Capella-Peris, C., and Gil-Gómez, J. [57]	Spain	Explores social entrepreneurship (SE) and examines Service Learning (SL) associated with students' SE competence development when applying SL (physical education).	Preservice teachers in early childhood education (N = 98). Quantitative method with a pre-experimental design using pre and post-test measures.	SL appears to be a good strategy for developing the SE of preservice teachers.	Encourage the research community to provide more data in this area, which may offer knowledge for university teachers in the design and implementation of SL programs concerning the features of their students.
6	Marq.S., Colecraft, E.K., Sakyi-Dawson, O., (...), Jensen, H.H., and Huff-Loneragan, E. [58]	Ghana	Test whether participation in an entrepreneurial and nutrition education intervention with microcredit was associated with the nutritional status of children.	Quasi-experimental study with women with children 2–5 years of age (N = 179). Intervention and nonintervention groups.	An integrated package of microcredit and education may improve the nutritional outcomes of children living in poor, rural communities.	Future studies need to consider a longer intervention timeframe and address additional determinants of child undernutrition.
7	Ojala, M., Ekman-Ladru, D., and Gustafson, K. [59]	Sweden	Explores parents' preschool choices and preferences in mobile preschool.	Interviews with parents (N = 15).	Two current educational discourses are education for sustainable development and entrepreneurship and how parents participate in reproducing these discourses.	NA

Table 2. Cont.

Number	Reference	Country	The Main Focus of the Research	Methodology	The Short Summary of the Results	Ideas for the Future Research
8	Radner, J.M., Ferrer, M.J.S., McMahon, D., Shankar, A.H., and Silver, K.L. [60]	US	Lessons from the Savings Brains portfolio. Transitioning early childhood interventions to scale. The early years of a child's life as vital for brain development.	Study of upscaling of small studies of young children. Analysis of lessons learned in Savings Brains projects. Analysis of the notes and presentations workshop. Interview with project leaders (N = 6).	Transitions early childhood development intervention to scale and sustainability, strong entrepreneurial leadership, rigorous measures and active use of data in support of adaptive learning, and champions acting at subnational levels (p. 230).	Call for the opportunity to apply, further test, and build upon lessons of the kind identified here. This will require continued attention to rigorous, rapid data collection and shared experiential learning with on-the-ground participants.
9	Schoon, I., and Duckworth, K. [61]	GB	Explores a developmental-contextual model of entrepreneurship in a nationally representative sample.	Young people in the 1970 British Birth Cohort until age 34 (N = 6116). Social, economic background, parental role models, academic ability, and social skills and self-concepts, as well as entrepreneurial intention.	For both men and women, becoming an entrepreneur was associated with social skills and entrepreneurial intention expressed at age 16. Different pathways were found for men and women. Conjoint influences of social structure and individual agency in shaping occupational choice and implementation.	NA
10	Yılmaz, H., Tunçeli, H.I., Yavuz, E.A., and Zembat, R. [62]	Turkey	Examines preschool teacher candidates' self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes toward the profession as predictors of their entrepreneurship.	Surveys with teacher candidates (N = 269) at universities.	Teacher candidates who have high self-efficacy beliefs and positive attitudes towards their profession are more entrepreneurial and are more likely to be more open to new ideas, try new things, and notice opportunities. The findings highlight the role of early competencies as well as contextual influences in shaping career development.	Future studies should focus on the characteristics and demands of the wider social context, especially where there are persistent social and gender inequalities regarding the realization of both individual potential and interests.
11	Yin, Y., Yang, L., and Liu, B. [63]	China	To diversify the creative thinking of preschool education students and improve their ability to start a business.	Questionnaires with preschool education college students (N = 205).	Only 35% had intended to start a business and made plans for entrepreneurship. In total, 90% had developed inadequate entrepreneurial ability, and 80% lacked professional knowledge. Recommendations to deal with early overall consciousness of college students to help them gain entrepreneurship skills.	Future studies should identify other variables that affect this result about professional self-efficacy and entrepreneurship.

In the articles, several categories emerge in entrepreneurship and preschool in the perspectives of access to preschool education, supporting preschool teacher education and training and preschool teachers, the parent perspective, and entrepreneurial skill sets among children.

5.1. Access to Preschool Education

In this theme, there were two articles. Abankina and Filatova (2017) [53] discuss the idea that attending kindergarten becomes a social standard. This social standard appears to be regardless of place of residence and family income. Thus, kindergarten becomes impossible due to the insufficient development of preschool infrastructure. Konobeeva (2012) [55] discusses access to preschools, and home-based kindergartens, as being characterized as

being closer to civic initiatives than to social enterprises. Both articles provide insights into the importance of accessibility to preschool and the social process preschool provides.

5.2. *Supporting Preschool Teacher Education and Training and Preschool Teachers*

In this theme, preschool teacher education and training, there were four articles. In their study, Maravé-Vivas et al. (2021) [57] report that Service Learning (SL) appears to be successful in developing social entrepreneurship skills among preservice teachers. Kondracka-Szala and Malinowska (2017) [54] report on recommendations for teacher training within the education framework for entrepreneurship by indicating direction and necessary changes for entrepreneurship in education. Yılmaz et al. (2022) [62] also take on entrepreneurial skills for preschool teacher candidates. Candidates who have high self-efficacy beliefs and positive attitudes towards their profession are, according to Yılmaz et al. (2022) [62], more entrepreneurial and are more likely to be more open to new ideas, try new things, and notice opportunities. Yin et al. (2022) [63] study the creative thinking of preschool education learners and how it is possible to improve students' ability to start a business. These researchers call for an early overall consciousness regarding entrepreneurship for college students. Lindström (2013) [56] discusses the need for teachers to support entrepreneurial skills for young children. This study shows a relationship between entrepreneurial education and citizenship education. These forms of education are close and dependent on one another. According to Lindström (2013) [56], these skills can strengthen the development of individuals' social inclusion skills from a very early age.

5.3. *The Parent Perspective*

Two articles take on the theme of the parent perspective. Ojala et al. (2020) [59] report on two current educational discourses: education for sustainable development and entrepreneurship, and how parents participate in reproducing these discourses regarding how parents choose mobile preschool. Marquis et al. (2015) [58] report on how entrepreneurial education regarding skill sets for mothers can support nutrition in young children. These authors suggest that an integrated package of microcredit and education may improve the nutritional outcomes of children living in poor, rural communities. Thus, parental education in entrepreneurial skills may support children in preschool ages.

5.4. *Entrepreneurial Skill Sets among Children*

Two articles were seen on this theme. Schoon and Duckworth (2012) [61] report that for both men and women, becoming an entrepreneur is associated with social skills and entrepreneurial intention expressed at the age of 16. Different pathways were found for men and women. Influences of social structure and individual agency in shaping occupational choice and implementation were identified. Radner et al. (2018) [60] discuss transitions in early childhood development and how to support intervention to scale strong entrepreneurial leadership, rigorous measures, and active use of data in support of adaptive learning may support each child.

5.5. *Ideas and Calls for Future Research*

While not all of the articles have explicit ideas or calls for future research, several articles call for studies on a societal, educational, and individual level.

Abankina and Filatova (2017) [53] suggest future studies take steps to support social well-being by strengthening preschool education. Konobeeva (2012) [55] calls for future research that accelerates market-related issues which affect, for example, public trust in home-based kindergartens. Marquis et al. (2015) [58] call for future research which has a longer intervention period and which addresses other determinants of child under-nutrition.

Maravé-Vivas et al. (2021) [57] suggest the encouragement of the research community to provide more data on service-learning programs concerning the features of their students for supporting entrepreneurship for preservice preschool teachers. Kondracka-Szala and

Malinowska (2017) [54] call for in-depth research to prepare such a curriculum for teacher training corresponding to the contemporary challenges of providing entrepreneurial skills. Yin et al. (2022) [63] seek future research identifying other variables that affect professional self-efficacy and entrepreneurship. Radner et al. (2018) [60] also call for continued attention to rigorous, rapid data collection, and shared experiential learning in future studies.

Future studies should focus on the characteristics and demands of the wider social context, especially where there are persistent social and gender inequalities regarding the realization of both individual potential and interests, according to Yilmaz et al. (2022) [62]. Finally, Lindström (2013) [56] seeks follow-up studies that would show whether children enrolled in preschools develop entrepreneurial skills and adopt an entrepreneurial approach in the long term. Further, Lindström (2013) [56] suggests that a longitudinal perspective could be helpful in an in-depth study of young citizens' perceptions of being citizens.

6. Discussion

The answer to whether entrepreneurship education has been examined in the context of preschool education is yes. However, the research in the field could be more robust because 36 Scopus publications on this theme have only been published from 2012 until 2022. However, the articles were only accepted for further analysis if they provided, in addition to the scientific quality, a concrete conceptual contribution to this study. Thus, we ended up having 11 articles to analyze in more detail.

This study found that the research is not limited to any continent or country. There are studies, for example, from Poland, Sweden, Spain, Russia, Ghana, The United States, Great Britain, Turkey, and China. We may also see the topic's interdisciplinary approach since different disciplines were presented, for example, Education, as well as Psychology, Sociology, Health, and Economics.

In the articles, a few categories emerge (a) access to preschool education, (b) supporting preschool teacher education and training preschool teachers, (c) the parent perspective, and (d) entrepreneurial skill sets among children. From these themes, we can highlight three interesting incoming angles in developing entrepreneurship education in preschool education. First, from a micro-level perspective, entrepreneurship education is seen as something that allows teachers to better support children's learning and development. Another micro-level angle stresses that entrepreneurial approaches support children's development and enable them to be active members of society. Thus, the focus of research is either on educators or other persons supporting the child or the children. Thirdly, the macrosocial income angle emerges. For example, how the accessibility of private preschool education is made possible. To sum up, the starting points and results of the research culminate either in the development of individuals or communities or in how an entrepreneurial society can enable or weaken, for example, the development of individuals. Thus, our outcomes align with Ladeveze's and Canal's (2016) [15] study, which points out three main aspects of approaching entrepreneurship education: the economic, the psychological, and the didactic approaches.

Interestingly, no research raises the income angle, showing how many opportunities integrating entrepreneurship education into the upbringing of young children could have in strengthening economic and social well-being. Only Lindström (2013) [56] shows how entrepreneurship education implemented in the early years also implements citizenship education simultaneously. Furthermore, Lindström (2013) [56] alone seeks follow-up studies that would show whether preschool children develop entrepreneurial skills and adopt an entrepreneurial approach in the long term.

As Hasmawaty (2020) [46] and Sarıkaya and Coşkun (2015) [45] highlight, through play in preschool, there are even more opportunities and capabilities to learn to solve challenging problems in the world. However, none of the articles in this study highlight such an approach. Furthermore, none of these articles stresses how growing up as a member of society begins naturally in the early years, when children enthusiastically play different roles or professions, such as a doctor, a teacher, or a salesperson. Thus, we may

also argue in this study, like Sarıkaya and Coşkun (2015) [45], that we could increase the quality of preschool practice by integrating new approaches to support children's learning and their participation in society from an early age. This could involve entrepreneurship education, which works as an excellent tool to grow members for societies, where there are different fields and different professions, and entrepreneurship can be seen across the board in different sectors. Furthermore, none of the articles focused on how children's entrepreneurial thinking and action could be developed with the help of entrepreneurship education, even though the emphasis on entrepreneurship education teaches learners to take more responsibility for themselves and their learning, strive for their goals, be creative, discover opportunities, and, in general, cope more successfully in a complex society [10,11]. Preschool education, in general, has an advantageous position in this regard due to its nature of enhancing, for example, creativity, problem-solving, and cooperation skills. Admittedly, this field of research still has a lot to do. Thus, all research on entrepreneurship education related to this level of education is valuable. The reason behind this may be that there has been an imbalance in research on entrepreneurship education concerning how important it is seen at different education levels, mainly focusing on older learners (e.g., [47]). Therefore, we see that education or entrepreneurship policies (e.g., [6,16]) to develop entrepreneurial and innovative societies do not, at least explicitly, take place in preschool education. However, we are also aware that the generalizations of this study have limitations. With the small sample size of papers and the absence of a clear conceptual framework, it is crucial to recognize potential biases and limitations in the research design. Moreover, studying preschool and entrepreneurship education in the global context, details and practices may vary across different countries and educational systems, which in the background can determine more than even assumed the outcomes of this study. Although, like Cohen et al., argue (2018), [50] the generalizability of such a single experiment (such as a pilot study) can be further extended, for example, through multiple experimental strategies, whereby a single pilot study contributes to the development of a growing data pool, ultimately achieving broader generalizability. Thus, this study builds on this income aspect and will support future research efforts.

Furthermore, as we presented at the beginning of this paper, integrating entrepreneurship education into programs of all educational levels could have more significant opportunities than we think. Education has high hopes for making the world a better place to live [1,3] and helping individuals find their place in the world [2]. According to the most recent GEM [6], entrepreneurship, often referred to as entrepreneurship and innovative education, has the potential to operate as the primary motor for society, promoting well-being, economic sustainability, and even solving wicked global challenges [7,8] such as climate change. Thus, our research highlights the potential of preschool education in the context of developing an entrepreneurial society and solving global challenges. Therefore, developing practical initiatives and research in different education sectors and in the field of preschool education are definitely needed if we want to strengthen entrepreneurial societies that enhance sustainable, social, and economic well-being. Thus, policymakers could also be more aware that entrepreneurship education is "civic education". The problem has been that entrepreneurship education is still easily integrated into hard values and only business development. Entrepreneurship education has much more potential; therefore, understanding concepts broadly in policies, practices, and research should play an essential role in the future.

7. Conclusions

This study found out how entrepreneurship education is reflected in the education of young children, such as in preschool education. Entrepreneurship education takes place at this level and from a global point of view across the board. Sometimes even inexplicitly because there are many similarities between entrepreneurship education and young children's pedagogy. We must be aware that the vocabulary and the discourse in preschool education may prefer and apply different concepts than entrepreneurship, such

as creativity and agency of children. However, the potential of entrepreneurship education could be utilized more in the education of young children if we would like to develop both economically and socially prosperous societies more ambitiously.

Thus, we encourage more research that generally studies entrepreneurship education in the preschool education context. Furthermore, we motivate the further study of entrepreneurship education in a preschool context, different types of preschool educational interventions, and what results can be achieved in promoting entrepreneurial education at preschools.

Our research may also contribute, for example, to the preparation of teacher education (e.g., [54]), educational strategies, and the development of curricula stressing the relevance of entrepreneurship education at the preschool level. Furthermore, we encourage practitioners to strengthen entrepreneurial pedagogy in the education of young children and at the preschool education level and realize follow-up studies in the field (e.g., [56]).

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