

From Classroom to Creativity: SMART-PUBLISH Toolkit for Special Needs Entrepreneurship in Publishing Children's Picture Books

Shyielathy Arumugam¹, Mazlina Che Mustafa², Norazilawati binti Abdullah³, Iylia Dayana Binti Shamsudin⁴, Mohd Ridhuan bin Mohd Jamil⁵, Masayu binti Dzainudin⁶

Abstract

Entrepreneurship education equips individuals with the skills necessary to establish and manage businesses. However, in Malaysia, disability employment is often regarded as an act of charity, which perpetuates stigma. This study addresses this issue by developing the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit designed to facilitate the authoring, illustrating, and publishing of children's picture books by students with special needs. The research was conducted in three phases following the Richey & Klein (2007) model: (I) Needs Analysis, (II) Design and Development, and (III) Usability Testing. Phase I involved an online survey with 170 special education educators in Kuala Kangsar, revealing strong support for entrepreneurship education ($M=3.69$, $SD=0.96$), the promotion of entrepreneurial skills ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.83$), and the need for a toolkit ($M=3.99$, $SD=0.78$). During Phase II, 12 experts validated the toolkit constructs and items using the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM), achieving consensus across all criteria. In Phase III, the usability of the toolkit was evaluated with 27 special education educators, who provided over 70% positive consensus on all usability constructs. The study concludes that the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit empowers special education teachers to implement innovative teaching methods, thereby fostering entrepreneurship and creativity among students with special needs.

Keywords: *Fuzzy Delphi, Entrepreneurship, Kickstarter Toolkit, Authoring and Illustrating, Students with Special Needs.*

Introduction

Special education in Malaysia refers to the provision of education and support services for students with special needs or disabilities. The Malaysian government aims to ensure that all children, including those with disabilities, have access to quality education (Sharul Hapizah Musa, Elia Binti Md Zain, Muhd Zulkifli Ismail, Hifzan Binti Mat Hussin & Norazmi B Nordin, 2021). Accordingly, policies and programs have been implemented to support the education of students with special needs (Baqutayan et al., 2016). The Ministry of Education in Malaysia has established the Special Education Division (SED) to manage and provide support for special education programs across the country. The SED offers resources, training, and support to teachers and schools to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. In Malaysia, various types of schools cater to students with special needs. These include government schools with special education programs, private schools offering special education services, and specialized schools designed for students with disabilities. Students with special needs can attend these schools free of charge, and the government provides funding to ensure these schools have the necessary resources and facilities to offer quality education (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, 2019).

Additionally, the Malaysian government has implemented policies to support the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools (Nur Kamariah et al., 2022). This includes providing additional resources and support services, such as learning aids and assistive technology, to enable students with disabilities to access the curriculum and participate in classroom activities. The government also encourages the hiring of special education teachers and support staff to work with students with special needs in mainstream schools (Bahagian Pendidikan Khas, 2022).

¹ Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Ipoh (IPGM), Email: shyielathy@gmail.com

² Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, Email: mazlina.cm@fpm.upsi.edu.my, (Corresponding author).

³ Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, Email: nora@fpm.upsi.edu.my.

⁴ Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, Email: iylidayana@fpm.upsi.edu.my.

⁵ Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, Email: mohdridhuan@fpm.upsi.edu.my

⁶ Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, Email: masayu@fpm.upsi.edu.my

Special education teachers in Malaysia are trained to provide individualized education plans (IEPs) for each student, which include specific goals and objectives based on their needs. The IEPs are regularly reviewed to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments to the curriculum (Hannah Aqilah Amran et al., 2019). Overall, special education in Malaysia has developed significantly in recent years. The government's commitment to providing quality education for all students, including those with disabilities, has led to the establishment of a comprehensive special education system. The inclusion of skills-oriented subjects in the special education curriculum aims to enhance the prospects of students securing appropriate jobs (Shaffeei, 2021). While teachers teach skill subjects at school, it is important to also introduce students with special needs to the principles of entrepreneurship education. However, there remains room for improvement, particularly in terms of access to resources and support services for students with special needs in remote and rural areas (Sharul Hapizah Musa, Elia Md Zain, Muhd Zulkifli Ismail, Hifzan Mat Hussin & Mohd Norazmi Nordin, 2021).

Problem Statement

With a population of over 34 million people, Malaysia is home to approximately 633,653 individuals with disabilities. The biggest obstacle facing people with disabilities today is the competition for employment opportunities after completing their education. While some are fortunate enough to continue their studies in colleges and universities, others are stay-at-home (Mohd Hadir Hj Mahat, 2022).

In Malaysia, employment opportunities for persons with disabilities have been historically viewed as an act of charity, and they are often stereotyped as welfare cases (Dzalani Harun et al., 2020). This perception has contributed to a lack of opportunities for people with disabilities in the job market, leading to high unemployment rates among this population. Individuals with disabilities encounter challenges when seeking employment primarily due to a lack of understanding of disabilities (Norhayati Mat Yusoff et al., 2024).

This leads to negative attitudes towards hiring people with disabilities and a reluctance to do so among employers. According to the database of the human resource management information system, individuals with physical disabilities are extensively employed in both the private and public sectors (Kementerian Sumber Manusia, 2022) while those with learning disabilities are the least employed among people with disabilities. In 2022, from 618 applications, no employment is recorded from the category of learning disabilities.

This can significantly limit their employment prospects, with many being unable to find work after completing secondary education, particularly those who are classified as low-functioning. Under normal circumstances an employer is more willing and willing to employ a normal worker who can perform more than one task regardless of the obstacles and constraints compared to the disabled (Saadiyah Juliana Saadun, Roslinda Alias, Ahmad Rithaudin Md Noor, Hamimah Hashim, Mas Suryalis Ahmad & Kartini Illias., 2024). Essentially, entrepreneurship can be a viable option to assist individuals with disabilities in securing employment, particularly those who are unable to work full-time job.

Reserach Objective

- To identify the needs of developing a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books for special education teachers to teach students with special needs.
- To develop a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books for special education teachers
- To test the suitability of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit and analyse educators' responses on the usability of the toolkit.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship education in Special Education in Malaysia.

Entrepreneurship education in special education is gaining momentum in Malaysia. There is a growing recognition that students with special needs can benefit from entrepreneurial education (Thivya Kalaichelvan & Norasmah Othman, 2024), which can help them develop skills such as problem-solving, creativity, and self-reliance. The Malaysian government has taken steps to promote entrepreneurship education in special education. The Ministry of Education has launched programs to provide special education students with entrepreneurial skills, such as the Entrepreneurship Club program. The program aims to equip students with skills such as budgeting, planning, and marketing. The Ministry has also introduced the 1Malaysia Entrepreneurship Program for Special Education, which provides funding and training for students with special needs to start their own businesses. Private organizations are also stepping up to support entrepreneurship education in special education. For example, the Malaysian Association for the Blind has partnered with the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre to launch the Empowerment through Entrepreneurship program for visually-impaired students. The program offers training and resources to help students develop entrepreneurial skills and start their own businesses.

Overall, there is a growing awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship education for students with special needs in Malaysia, and efforts are being made to provide them with the skills and resources they need to succeed. Thus entrepreneurship behaviour must be instilled in students right from the school level. Entrepreneurship activities introduced must also consider aspects like students strength ,ability and interest.

Authoring and Illustrating Children’s Story Books as an entrepreneurship activity for students with special needs.

Picture books are an important source of language, concepts and lesson for young children(Strouse et al., 2018). There are many kinds of storybooks in the form of picture books that take readers from magical to fantasy world characters, to the land of different animals or close to home about daily routines with rich illustrations. Picture books with its generic categorization entertains a wide spectrum of readers from an early age to adults and beyond (Hana Hladikova, 2014).It has a unique way to inspire anyone with the greater power of language visualization. Over the years the sales of children’s picture books are seen hiking up serving as the latest trend in children’s literature (Short, 2018).Having said that, publishing trends are emerging with new technologies that encourages innovative book format and designs offering new authors and illustrators to provide a greater range of books for children. In this article I present how we unlocked the hidden potential of students with special needs in authoring and illustrating children picture books and self publish.This article focusses on the first phase of the development of kickstarter toolkit of entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children story books. The toolkit will provide guidance and resources for individuals interested in creating entrepreneurial children's books, and identifying the specific needs and requirements of potential users is crucial to ensure its effectiveness. The analysis will identify the necessary components and features that should be included in the toolkit to meet the needs of educators and students in promoting entrepreneurship and creativity through the creation of children's storybooks.

Method

This quantitative study utilizes the design and development (DDR) approach as proposed by (Richey & Klein, 2012).

The research employs the DDR approach to develop the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit, which focuses on authoring and illustrating children's picture books for special education teachers. The purpose is to teach students with special needs the skills of authoring, illustrating, and publishing. The DDR approach is a systematic research design commonly used for developing products or tools. It involves analyzing data from participants, applying statistical analysis to the data, and conducting the inquiry in an unbiased and objective manner (Creswell, 2018). Developmental research serves the purpose of either

generating generalizable conclusions or producing context-specific solutions to research problems (Richey & Klein, 2005). The justification for selecting the DDR approach for this study is its aim to develop a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for smart publishing of children's picture books, including the identification of suitable constructs and items, expert validation of these elements, and testing the suitability of the developed product with the target population.

This approach provides researchers with a structured framework for designing their study and offers flexibility in selecting appropriate instruments and research methods for each phase (Ramlan Mustapha, 2017). Fundamentally this approach is going through three comprehensive phases (Richey & Klien, 2007). The phases are as follows:

- I. Phase 1 is known as Need Analysis.
- II. Phase 2 is known as Design & Develop
- III. Phase 3 is known as evaluation or usability.

In this research, the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM) is used to analyse the collected data. The reason behind the selection of this research design is to validate and gain expert consensus on the constructs and the items in the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit. The FDM too allows the researcher to conduct a quantitative research design with triangular fuzzy numbers and defuzzification process to measure the experts' consensus. The FDM varies from the Delphi Technique by reducing the number of expert validation cycle, and the participants of the study remain anonymity (Mohd Ridhuan Mohd Jamil et al., 2017). Table 1 below shows the research method used in each phase for this study which was adapted from Design and Developmental Research: Emergent Trends in Educational Research (2013).

Table 1. Research Methods Based on DDR Approach

Phase	Research Method
Phase 1: Need Analysis	Literature Reviews, and Survey design (score mean and percentage)
Phase 2: Design & Development	Focus Group Discussion, Literature Reviews and Fuzzy Delphi
Phase 3: Usability Test	Nominal Group Technique.

Phase 1: Need Analysis

In the DDR approach, the initial stage of research involves conducting a need analysis. This phase enables the researcher to pinpoint the requirements for developing a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit of entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's story books. Each research question leads to the development of the product to be developed. The need analysis phase is crucial in establishing whether there is a necessity to create a product or material that can aid professional practice. (Mahfuzah Zainol et al., 2021).

The need analysis phase aims to address the following research questions:

What are needs of developing a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books for special education teachers to teach students with special needs.

In general, what are the special needs educator's perception in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom.

What are teachers' perceptions on methods used to carryout entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom?

What is the teacher's perception on the needs to develop the SMART-PUBLISH entrepreneurship-based projects' Kickstarter toolkit like a toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books?

In the need analysis phase, the target population comprises of educators who teach in the special education integrated program of Kuala Kangsar District, which includes both primary and secondary schools. There are a total of 17 primary schools and 8 secondary schools in the district that offer this program, with a combined special needs educator population of 280. The researcher utilized the judgmental sampling method to select 170 special education educators for this phase. This non-probability sampling technique involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics (Zainudin Awang, 2015). To gain insight into the phenomena of interest from knowledgeable and experienced individuals (Ilker Etikan and Sulaiman Abubakar Musa, 2016) the researcher selected participants who were proficient and willing to provide information. Therefore, the special education integrated program educators from Kuala Kangsar District were selected using the judgmental sampling method for this phase, as the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit is intended to assist special education educators in teaching special educational needs students how to write, illustrate, and publish children's picture books. From the total number of special needs educators population, the required sample size for the need analysis phase is 162 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). However, the survey received a total number of 170 respondents. Participants for the need analysis phase is presented in table 3 below.

An instrument designed for this phase is a set of need analysis survey questionnaire. The survey consists of 5 sections on aspects relating to entrepreneurship education: Section A: Educator Details; Section B: Educator's perception in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classrooms, Section C: Methods used by educators to carryout entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom, Section D: Needs to develop entrepreneurship-based projects' SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit. The survey questionnaire reached the participants through online as well as googles mails. This survey questionnaire aims to understand from educators, the needs to develop a SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for entrepreneurship activities such as authoring and illustrating children's picture books. The items for this questionnaire is adapted from Measurement Tool for Entrepreneurship Education (MTEE) by LUT University Finland in 2020 (Finland, 2020). This is a self-evaluation tool primary and secondary level teachers in order to support the implementation of entrepreneurship education, thereby providing a pedagogical aid for the planning, assessment, and development of teaching (Oikkonen et al., 2015). The questions uses 5 points Likert scale. Data were analysed using SPSS and yielded the results discussed in the findings section of the paper.

Phase 2: Design & Development

SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit is a guide for special education teacher who wants to teach students with special needs on authoring, illustrating and publishing children's storybooks. The core of this development study is based on experiential learning theory in entrepreneurship education (Koustas & Salehi, 2022), venture creation approach and the Three-Act-Structure Model (Field & Meltatasa, 2005). SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit consists of 3 sections as a main constructs of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit. The 3 sections are developed based on the Three-Act-Structure Model. However a group discussion was also held with 3 experts from the area of authoring, illustrating and publishing to discuss suitability of the 3 sections selected based the Three-Act-Structure Model.

The design and development phase aims to answer the following research questions:

What is the design and development of Kickstarter Toolkit of entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books.?

- What is the suitable title of the Kickstarter toolkit?
- What are the suitable contents of the Kickstarter toolkit based on experts consensus?

- What are the suitable outlines in the content of the manual book of Kickstarter toolkit based on experts consensus?

In order to achieve the objectives of this phase, a kickstarter toolkit to author and publish children's picture books was developed along with the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM) to answer the research questions. The Fuzzy method is an analytical method based on the Delphi method that draws on the idea of the Fuzzy theory. This method uses the independent consensus of a group of experts in the subject field. The purpose of this method was to elicit perceptions or judgements held by "experts" knowledgeable in a specialized area (Blair & UHL, 1993). A survey questionnaire was developed to get experts view on the appropriateness of the constructs and items suggested to form the screening tool. The questionnaire consists of 7 sections with 7 point Likert scale. Section A is experts demography; section b: experts view on the title of the Kickstarter toolit, section c: experts view on the content of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit, section d: experts view on the outlines of the manual book of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit, section e: experts view on the items of topic 1: steps to prepare the story in the manual book of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit, section:f: experts view on the items of topic 2: steps to prepare the illustrations in the manual book of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit and section g: experts view on the items of topic 3: steps to self-publish and marketing in the manual book of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit.

Samples selected for this phase is by purposeful sampling technique. Samples are not selected randomly, so representativeness is not assured. Instead, they are selected for a purpose, to apply their knowledge to a particular problem based on a criterion (Hasson, Keeney, & McKenna, 2000). It is suggested that a range of 10 to 50 specialists should be considered (Jones & Twiss, 1978). As a result, a total of 12 experts were selected for the purpose of this research through the implementation of the purposive sampling technique. The composition of the group consisted of individuals who are experts in authoring, illustrating, editors and publishers The individuals possessing expertise in the sector held a minimum of a bachelor's degree as an academic credential, accompanied by a minimum of five years of practical experience.

Phase 3: Usability Test

The aim of this phase is to test the usability and suitability of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books that emphasize entrepreneurship, especially among the user population consisting of special education educators. The SMART-PUBLISH toolkit has to go through a usability evaluation phase in line with the design and development (DDR) research approach Usability encompasses three key dimensions: effectiveness, efficiency, and user satisfaction, which collectively evaluate the user's experience and perception of a developed product. (Milano & Ullius, 1998).

In the context of this research, the aspect of satisfaction (Mazidah Mat Rejab, Suruayati Chuprat, Nurulhuda Firdaus & Mohd Azmi, 2018) is focused on special education educators from government agencies to evaluate the usability of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit. The level of usability of a developed product can be determined based on the expert's opinion and perceptions given upon using the product (Don J.F.J & Gwo H. T, 2012). In this research, SMART-PUBLISH was best tested by special education educators because they have the opportunity to observe the usability of the toolkit when teaching the special educational students in the classroom.

The research questions formulated in this phase are as follow:

What is the usability of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books from educators opinions?

- What are educators opinion on the suitability of the title of the Kickstarter toolkit?
- What are educators opinion on suitability of the contents of the Kickstarter toolkit?

- What are educators opinion on the suitability of the outlines of the manual book of the Kickstarter toolkit?
- What are educators opinion on the usability of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit to teach authoring and illustrating for students with special needs?

The analysis of the data obtained from the survey questionnaire was conducted using Modified Nominal Group Techniques (NGT). In the context of NGT (Nominal Group Technique), the decision-making process entails the facilitation of a group discussion wherein several members engage in face-to-face interaction, ultimately culminating in the determination of a choice. (Aizzat Mohd. Nasurdin et al., 2006). The rationale behind the utilization of NGT is to facilitate the participation of all group members in a systematic manner, while minimizing the potential for mutual influence. In this study, the Modified NGT was employed because the researcher intend to evaluate the usability of the toolkit. Besides this reason, the researcher also intends to know the percentage value and the acceptance of each construct and items representing the toolkit from the users (special education educators). As for this research, a number of 27 potential experts from Ministry of Education who are the special education educators were selected to be the participants because they represent the target population who are going to use the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit . The participants are teaching special education students from both the primary and secondary national schools.

Results

Findings Phase I: The Need Analysis

The following findings reported on special needs educator's perception on in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classrooms, methods used by educators to carryout entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom, and the needs to develop entrepreneurship based projects' kickstarter toolkit. Findings from these reports justified the needs to develop a kickstarter toolkit for an entrepreneurship activity which is authoring and illustrating children's picture books.. Data collected was analysed using descriptive to obtain percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Findings of special needs educator's perception on in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classrooms.

Therefore before considering of developing a kickstarter toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books, there was a need to investigate if the special needs educators needs a kickstarter toolkit to teach special needs students to author, illustrate and publish children's picture books. Thus, the study attempted to answer the first sub-question of this phase:

RQ 1(a). In general what are the special needs educator's perception in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom.

This section analysed educators' perceptions in implementing entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom. Table 2 is reporting the average percentage and mean value obtained from the data analysis.

Table 2. Special Needs Educator's Perception in Implementing Entrepreneurship Education in The Special Education Classroom

Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
1 Entrepreneurship education is important in our special education program	1.76%	0.59%	4.71%	48.24%	44.71%	4.34	0.75
2 Entrepreneurship education activity is led by teachers in our school.	2.35%	1.18%	13.53%	50.00%	32.94%	4.10	0.85
3 In our special education program, we have the resources needed to implement entrepreneurship education.	4.12%	15.29%	28.82%	36.47%	15.29%	3.44	1.05
4 In our special education program, we have a designated teacher or team in charge of entrepreneurship education.	5.29%	21.18%	32.35%	32.35%	8.82%	3.18	1.04
5 The teachers in our special education program have an opportunity to participate in entrepreneurship education-related training every year.	10.59%	28.24%	27.06%	27.06%	7.06%	2.92	1.12
6 As an educational institution, we work together as a team to plan how entrepreneurship education is carried out.	2.35%	8.24%	19.41%	44.71%	25.29%	3.82	0.98
7 In my opinion, the atmosphere in our special education program	1.76%	4.71%	14.71%	46.47%	32.35%	4.03	0.91

supports entrepreneurial approach.							
Average	4.03%	11.34%	20.08%	40.76%	23.78%	3.69	0.96

The study aims to assess whether special needs educators require the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit for creating children's picture books by examining their attitudes towards entrepreneurship education in the classroom. Data from Table 2, with a mean of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.96, indicates that most educators have a positive perception of implementing entrepreneurship education, recognizing its value for students with special needs. While most items show strong agreement, a few—such as resource availability (M=3.44, SD=1.05), having a designated teacher (M=3.18, SD=1.04), and access to entrepreneurship training (M=2.92, SD=1.12)—reflect moderate agreement. This suggests educators are supportive but need more resources, training, and dedicated personnel to fully implement entrepreneurship education in special education settings.

Findings of teachers perceptions on methods used to carryout entrepreneurship

education in the special education classroom.

In this section, the study sought to investigate if the educators are using some methods to carryout entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom. Thus the study attempted to answer the second sub-question of this phase:

RQ 1(b). What are teachers perceptions on methods used to carryout entrepreneurship education in the special education classroom?

This section analysed the methods educators' use to teach entrepreneurship in the special education classroom. Table 3 is reporting the average percentage and mean value obtained from the data analysis.

Table 3. Methods Used to Carryout Entrepreneurship Education in the Special Education Classroom.

	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
1	I discuss with students how entrepreneurship is related to the subject being taught.	1.18%	3.53%	21.18%	55.29%	18.82%	3.87	0.80
2	I use entrepreneurs' success stories in my teaching to inspire students.	1.18%	4.71%	19.41%	58.24%	16.47%	3.84	0.79
3	I encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship competitions.	1.76%	4.12%	22.35%	49.41%	22.35%	3.86	0.87
4	I guide students' entrepreneurship related projects.	1.18%	4.71%	14.71%	57.06%	22.35%	3.95	0.82

5	I encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship carnivals (sale, fair, kiosk etc) which develops entrepreneurial competences.	1.76%	2.94%	14.12%	57.65%	23.53%	3.98	0.81
6	I guide students to plan their future direction of their entrepreneurship products.	1.76%	5.29%	19.41%	52.94%	20.59%	3.85	0.87
	Average	1.47%	4.22%	18.53%	55.10%	20.69%	3.89	0.83

The study aimed to identify the methods employed by educators to impart entrepreneurship education in the classroom and to recognize the current practices of educators. Based on the interpretation of data from table 3, it can be inferred that the mean value of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.83 indicates that a majority of special education teachers are consistently making efforts to promote entrepreneurial behaviors and skills among their students with special educational needs. Furthermore, all items in this construct score high on the mean, suggesting that educators possess some prior knowledge on entrepreneurship education. These findings strongly support the notion that educators are equipped with the necessary knowledge to effectively teach entrepreneurship education in the classroom. Finally, in the next section, findings on the needs to develop the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit for entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books is reported.

Findings of teacher's perception on the needs to develop the SMART-PUBLISH

entrepreneurship based projects' kickstarter toolkit like a toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books.

In this section, the study sought to investigate educators perception on the needs to develop an entrepreneurship based projects' kickstarter toolkit like a toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books. Thus the study attempted to answer the second sub-question of this phase:

RQ 1(c). What are the teacher's perception on the needs to develop the SMART-PUBLISH entrepreneurship based projects' kickstarter toolkit like a toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books?

This section analysed the educators perception on the needs to develop an entrepreneurship based projects' kickstarter toolkit like a toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books.

Table 4 is reporting the average percentage and mean value obtained from the data analysis.

Table 4. Analysis of The Findings of The Needs to Develop The SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit for Authoring and Illustrating Children's Picture Books.

	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
1	Toolkit can help me in planning entrepreneurship activities for Students.	1.18%	4.12%	21.18%	49.41%	24.12%	3.91	0.85
2	Toolkit can help me to promote entrepreneur activities to a greater extent to other schools and community.	1.18%	2.35%	17.06%	55.88%	23.53%	3.98	0.78
3	Toolkit can help students to initiate activity independently.	1.18%	1.18%	15.29%	58.82%	23.53%	4.02	0.74
4	Toolkit encourages parents to participate in entrepreneurship activities at home with children.	1.18%	1.76%	17.06%	55.29%	24.71%	4.01	0.77
5	Toolkit can help to promote the best practice of entrepreneurship activities in a wider population.	1.18%	1.76%	15.29%	55.88%	25.88%	4.04	0.77
	Average	1.18%	2.24%	17.18%	55.06%	24.35%	3.99	0.78

Upon further investigation into the perception of special education teachers regarding the necessity of a kickstarter toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books, the data showed an average mean value of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.78. The mean value indicates that special education teachers from the integrated program in Kuala Kangsar district strongly agree that a kickstarter toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books is needed. Moreover, all items in this construct score high on the mean, supporting the crucial importance of a kickstarter toolkit for authoring and illustrating children's picture books.

Findings Phase II: Design & Development of SMART-PUBLISH

Findings phase (II) reports, that the experts have a fair degree of agreement on the constructs and items suggested to form SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit. The constructs and items have met the threshold value of equals to and less than 0.2 and the experts' consensus equals to and more than 70% to form the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter toolkit.

Analysis of Experts Consensus on the suitable title of the kickstarter toolkit.

What is the design and development of Kickstarter Toolkit of entrepreneurship authoring and illustrating children's picture books.?

What is the suitable title of the kickstarter toolkit?

The development of the Kickstarter Toolkit for entrepreneurship in authoring and illustrating children's picture books involved expert evaluation of five proposed titles. Based on the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM), three titles met the required consensus threshold ($d < 0.2$):

- Title 3: SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring & Illustrating Children's Picture Books,
- Title 4: Kickstarter Toolkit: Guide for Writing and Publishing Children's Picture Books, and
- Title 5: PUBLISH-SMART Kickstarter Toolkit: How to Write and Publish Children's Picture Books.

These titles were accepted, as they reflected strong agreement among experts. The remaining two titles exceeded the threshold value of 0.2, indicating a lack of consensus (Cheng & Lin, 2002; Ching-Hsue, 1999). Specifically, experts 1–12 disagreed on Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring of Children's Picture Books and Kickstarter Toolkit: How to Write and Publish Children's Picture Books, leading to their rejection. The threshold values were calculated based on responses to the entire questionnaire to determine overall agreement levels

Table 5: Threshold Value D For Suitable Title of the Kickstarter Toolkit

Experts	ITEM = 5 Nilai threshold $d < 0.2$				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	0.095	0.588	0.064	0.021	0.053
2	0.523	0.267	0.064	0.021	0.053
3	0.523	0.588	0.064	0.021	0.053
4	0.095	0.394	0.089	0.152	0.338
5	0.095	0.062	0.064	0.021	0.053
6	0.332	0.394	0.064	0.152	0.053
7	0.095	0.286	0.089	0.152	0.053
8	0.332	0.267	0.089	0.244	0.053
9	0.523	0.062	0.064	0.021	0.053
10	0.219	0.394	0.089	0.021	0.053
11	0.461	0.062	0.064	0.021	0.199
12	0.332	0.286	0.089	0.244	0.053
Value d for each item	0.302	0.304	0.074	0.091	0.089

The second rule of FDM requires that expert consensus must exceed 75%. As shown in Table 6, titles 3, 4, and 5 achieved more than 75% consensus, while titles 1 and 2 were rejected, with consensus at 33% and 25%, respectively. The third rule involves the fuzzy score (A), where the average fuzzy number must meet an α -cut of 0.5 (Bodjanova, 2006). While titles 1 and 2 had fuzzy scores above 0.5, they were still rejected as they failed to meet all three FDM criteria. The ranking based on the fuzzy score shows that SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring & Illustrating Children's Picture Books is the most agreeable title, chosen by expert consensus.

Table 6. Experts Group Consensus on the Titles of Kickstarter Toolkit

Title	Threshold Value, d	Experts Group Consensus Percentage, %	m1	m2	m3	Score Fuzzy (A)	Constructs Accepted	R a n k i n g
Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring of Children's Picture Books.	0.302	33%	0.467	0.658	0.817	0.647	REJECTED	
Kickstarter Toolkit: How to write and publish children's picture books.	0.304	25%	0.533	0.708	0.842	0.694	REJECTED	
SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring & Illustrating Children's Picture Books.	0.074	100%	0.783	0.942	1.000	0.908	ACCEPT	1
Kickstarter Toolkit: Guide for write and publish children's picture books.	0.091	83%	0.717	0.892	0.983	0.864	ACCEPT	2
PUBLISH-SMART Kickstarter Toolkit: How to write and publish children's picture books.	0.089	92%	0.550	0.742	0.917	0.736	ACCEPT	3

Analysis of Experts Consensus on The Suitable Contents of The Kickstarter Toolkit

What are the suitable contents of the kickstarter toolkit based on experts consensus?

Precisely to meet the first rule in FDM, there are 5 items in this section which have consensus among the experts with threshold value score below than 0.2. The second rule of FDM is percentage consensus of experts must be more than 75 %. Table 7 below shows that all 5 items proposed have gained group consensus more than 75 %. In order for the toolkit to reach the targetted population, the product must be user friendly with a complete set of guiding content. Therefore experts have agreed that all the content proposed to form the toolkit is essential for purpose of authoring and publishing. The SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit will be in the form of a giftbox. The content in the giftbox will be a manual book on how to author, illustrate and publish children's picture book. The manual is both in the form of hardcopy and e-copy. A sample of published children's storybook is also included in the toolkit.

Table 7. Items Under the Contents of The Kickstarter Toolkit

No	Item	Triangular Fuzzy Numbers		Defuzzification Process				Expert Consensus	Item Accepted
		Threshold Value, d	Percentage of Experts Group Consensus, %	m1	m2	m3	Score Fuzzy (A)		
1.	Toolkit is in the form of a gift box	0.092	92%	0.767	0.925	0.992	0.894	ACCEPTED	0.894
2.	Toolkit is in the form of electronic.	0.074	100%	0.783	0.942	1.000	0.908	ACCEPTED	0.908
3.	Toolkit contain a manual book of authoring and self-publishing children's book.	0.068	100%	0.833	0.967	1.000	0.933	ACCEPTED	0.933
4.	Toolkit contain a video clip on designing the book.	0.076	100%	0.800	0.950	1.000	0.917	ACCEPTED	0.917
5.	Toolkit contain a free self-published children's story book	0.083	92%	0.750	0.917	0.992	0.886	ACCEPTED	0.886

Analysis of Experts Consensus on the suitable outlines in the content of the manual book of kickstarter toolkit.

What are the suitable outlines in the content of the manual book of kickstarter toolkit based on experts consensus?

In this research question there are 4 important elements being proposed to gain experts consensus. They are:

- Contents of the manual book of the kickstarter toolkit.
- Content of Topic 1: Steps to prepare the story in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit
- Content of Topic 2: Steps to Prepare the illustrations in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit
- Content of Topic 3: Steps to Self-Publish and Marketing in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

Element i: Contents of the manual book of the kickstarter toolkit.

In this section, 7 items under the outlines in the content of the kickstarter toolkit have consensus among the experts with threshold value score below than 0.2. The second rule of FDM is percentage consensus of experts must be more than 75 %. Table 8 below shows that all the 7 items under outlines in the content of the kickstarter toolkit have gained group consensus more than 75 %. Thus the kickstarter toolkit will have a cover page, title page, copyright page, table of content page, Topic 1 on steps to prepare the story, Topic 2 on steps to prepare illustrations and topic 3 on steps to self-publish and marketing.

Table 8: Items Under Outlines in the Content of the Kickstarter Toolkit

No	Item	Triangular Fuzzy Numbers		Defuzzification Process				Expert Consensus	Item Accepted
		Threshold Value, d	Percentage of Experts Group Consensus, %	m1	m2	m3	Skor Fuzzy (A)		
1	Cover page	0.095	92%	0.817	0.950	0.992	0.919	ACCEPTED	0.919
2	Title page	0.068	100%	0.833	0.967	1.000	0.933	ACCEPTED	0.933
3	Copyright page	0.057	100%	0.850	0.975	1.000	0.942	ACCEPTED	0.942
4	Table of content page	0.057	100%	0.850	0.975	1.000	0.942	ACCEPTED	0.942
5	Topic 1: Steps to prepare the story	0.124	92%	0.817	0.942	0.975	0.911	ACCEPTED	0.911
6	Topic 2: Steps to prepare illustrations	0.124	92%	0.817	0.942	0.975	0.911	ACCEPTED	0.911
7	Topic 3: Steps to self-publish and marketing	0.128	92%	0.800	0.933	0.975	0.903	ACCEPTED	0.903

Element ii: Content of Topic 1: Steps to prepare the story in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit.

In this section, 6 items under the content of Topic 1: Steps to prepare the story in the manual book of kickstarter toolkit have consensus among the experts with threshold value score below than 0.2. The second rule of FDM is percentage consensus of experts must be more than 75 %. Table 9 below shows that all the 6 items under Topic 1 in the manual book of the kickstarter toolkit have gained group consensus more than 75 %. Thus experts have agreed that contents like identifying the theme, planning the story structure, identifying the climax, identifying the setting and writing the scripts is relevant to be the outlines of topic.

Table 9. Items Under Content of Topic 1: Steps to Prepare the Story in The Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

No	Item	Triangular Fuzzy Numbers		Defuzzification Process				Expert Consensus	Item Accepted
		Threshold Value, d	Percentage of Experts Group Consensus, %	m1	m2	m3	Skor Fuzzy (A)		
1	Identifying the theme	0.087	92%		0.833	0.958	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.928
2	Planning the story structure; Beginning-Middle-Ending	0.075	92%		0.850	0.967	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.936
3	Identifying the characters.	0.075	92%		0.850	0.967	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.936
4	Identifying the climax	0.075	92%		0.850	0.967	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.936
5	Identifying the setting; e.g, sunny day, happy feelings, in the park, in the classroom.	0.075	92%		0.850	0.967	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.936
6	Writing the script	0.075	92%		0.850	0.967	0.992	ACCEPTED	0.936

Element iii : Content of Topic 2: Steps to Prepare the illustrations in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

In this section, 5 items under the content of Topic 2: Steps to Prepare the illustrations in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit have consensus among the experts with threshold value score below than 0.2. The second rule of FDM is percentage consensus of experts must be more than 75 %. Table 10 below shows that all the 5 items under Topic 2 in the manual book of the kickstarter toolkit have gained group consensus more than 75 %. Thus experts have agreed that contents like creating character, designing book cover illustrations, prepare storyboard based on the text, check the illustration and story compatibility and deciding the suitable art medium are relevant to be the outlines of topic 2

Table 10: Items Under Content of Topic 2: Steps to Prepare the Story in The Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

No	Item	Triangular Fuzzy Numbers		Defuzzification Process				Expert Consensus	Item Accepted
		Threshold Value, d	Percentage of Experts Group	m1	m2	m3	Skor Fuzzy (A)		

			Consensus, %						
1	Creating character	0.095	92%	0.817	0.950	0.992	0.919	ACCEPTED	0.919
2	Designing Book Cover illustration	0.122	83%	0.800	0.933	0.983	0.906	ACCEPTED	0.906
3	Prepare storyboard based on the text	0.087	92%	0.833	0.958	0.992	0.928	ACCEPTED	0.928
4	Check the illustration and story compatibility.	0.087	92%	0.833	0.958	0.992	0.928	ACCEPTED	0.928
5	Deciding the suitable art medium for the illustration: e.g digital, water colours, pencil colours, cryon and etc.	0.095	92%	0.817	0.950	0.992	0.919	ACCEPTED	0.919

Element iv: Content of Topic 3: Steps to Self-Publish and Marketing in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

In this section, 5 items under the content of Topic 3: Steps to Self-Publish and Marketing in the Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit have consensus among the experts with threshold value score below than 0.2. The second rule of FDM is percentage consensus of experts must be more than 75 %. Table 11 below shows that all the 5 items under Topic 3 in the manual book of the kickstarter toolkit have gained group consensus more than 75 %. Thus experts have agreed that contents like designing the book, procedures of applying for ISBN, self-printing, deciding book price and framing the marketing plan are relevant to be the outlines of topic 3.

Table 11: Items Under Content of Topic 3: Steps to Self-Publish and Marketing in The Manual Book of Kickstarter Toolkit

No	Item	Triangular Fuzzy Numbers		Defuzzification Process				Expert Consensus	Item Accepted
		Threshold Value, d	Percentage of Experts Group Consensus, %	m1	m2	m3	Skor Fuzzy (A)		
1	Designing the book e.g Size, book layout, margin and pagination.	0.057	100%	0.850	0.975	1.000	0.942	ACCEPTED	0.942
2	Procedures of applying for ISBN	0.042	100%	0.867	0.983	1.000	0.950	ACCEPTED	0.950
3	Self-Printing the book	0.042	100%	0.867	0.983	1.000	0.950	ACCEPTED	0.950

4	Deciding book price	0.057	100%	0.85 0	0.97 5	1.00 0	0.942	ACCEPTED	0.942
5	Framing the marketing plan	0.074	100%	0.81 7	0.95 8	1.00 0	0.925	ACCEPTED	0.925

Findings of Phase III: Usability Test

Finally, in phase (III), all the constructs and items of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit has reached the agreement of usability according to the perception of the expert participants with group consensus equals to and more than 70%.

Analysis of educators opinion on the overall usability of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring and Illustrating Children's Picture Books.

What are educators' opinions on the usability of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit for teaching authoring and illustrating to students with special needs?

In addition to evaluating the toolkit's constructs and items, it was essential to gather user opinions on its usability in helping students with special needs author, illustrate, and self-publish children's picture books. For this purpose, usability items were adapted from Mohd Ridhuan Mohd Jamil (2017) and modified for this study. Five usability items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "totally disagree" to "totally agree." Table 11 shows the percentage of participant agreement on the toolkit's overall usability.

Table 12: Educators Opinion on the Overall Usability Of SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit of Entrepreneurship Authoring and Illustrating Children's Picture Books.

NO	Item	Total Score (n=27)	Percentage (%)	Results
1	The Toolkit can help special education educators in planning authoring and illustrating activities for special education students.	176	93.1	Suitable
2	The Toolkit can help special education educators to promote authoring and publishing activities to greater extent to other schools and community.	165	87.3	Suitable
3	This Toolkit can help students to initiate publishing activities independently with their parents.	168	88.9	Suitable
4	Toolkit encourages parents to participate in entrepreneurship activities at home with children.	175	92.6	Suitable
5	Toolkit can help to promote the best practice of children's picture books publishing in a wider population	173	91.5	Suitable

The findings from the data analysis reveal that all five proposed toolkit content items are considered suitable based on educators' feedback, with a usability percentage of $\geq 70\%$ (Deslandes et al., 2010). It was crucial to gather educators' opinions on the overall usability of the SMART-PUBLISH Kickstarter Toolkit. After a thorough evaluation, 93.1% of educators reported that the toolkit is highly usable for helping special education teachers plan authoring and illustrating activities for their students. Additionally, 87.3% believe

the toolkit can facilitate authoring and publishing activities in other schools and communities, while 88.9% feel it empowers students to independently pursue publishing with parental support. Furthermore, 92.6% of educators think the toolkit encourages parental involvement in entrepreneurship activities at home, and 91.5% agree it promotes the sharing of best practices in children's picture book publishing with a broader audience. Overall, the data indicate a positive perception of the toolkit's usability.

Discussion

The Smart-Publish Kickstarter Toolkit aims to address a significant gap within the school system by equipping special education educators with the necessary tools to effectively instruct students with special needs. It connects conventional educational resources with the unique requirements of children with special needs (Jamshidovna & Bahodirovich, 2021).

Students with special needs often encounter challenges in expressing their thoughts and emotions. This toolkit employs picture books, incorporating both authorship and illustration, to facilitate meaningful and enjoyable expression for these children.

SMART-PUBLISH empowers special education educators by providing an accessible and effective means to engage with their students. It equips educators with the tools and resources necessary to foster creativity, build self-confidence, and encourage self-expression, all of which are critical for students with special needs.

A notable feature of this toolkit is its emphasis on practical implementation in the real-world processes of authoring, illustrating, and publishing. By guiding students through the development of their own picture books, it offers concrete and purpose-driven learning opportunities. In addition to acquiring fundamental authoring and illustration skills, students experience a sense of accomplishment through the publication of their work.

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be made to further improve the performance of the toolkit. The incorporation of assistive technologies, such as speech recognition, text-to-speech, and sensory feedback, can address a wider range of special needs. Training and professional development programs specifically designed for educators can enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in using the toolkit. Finally, implementing a mechanism to monitor and measure the outcomes of the toolkit is essential. Future research initiatives can devise methods for monitoring and gauging the educational results and advancements made by students with special needs. These data's utility can be demonstrated to various stakeholders through their utilization.

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Authors' Contribution

Shyielathy Arumugam. planned the research study and lead the writing of the manuscript.

Mazlina Che Mustafa. Corresponding and supervised the research.

Norazilawati binti Abdullah. Authored the introduction, problem statement of the paper.

Iylia Dayana Bt Shamsudin. Assisted in data collection.

Mohd Ridhuan bin Mohd Jamil. Planned the methodology and interpreted the result.

Masayu Bt Dzainudin. Took the lead in writing the manuscript.

Masayu binti Dzainudin.

All authors provided critical feedback and helped shape the research, analysis and manuscript.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

We certify that the article is the Authors' and Co-Authors' original work. The article has not received prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify to the fact that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to Journal of Ecohumanism.

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