

NTUC First Campus's Social Responsibility Communication in the Context of Early Childhood Education Singapore

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Abstract

This study examines how social responsibility is communicated by NTUC First Campus (NFC), a social enterprise operating in Singapore's early childhood education (ECE) sector, through its 2025 Annual Report. The study responds to a gap in ECE literature regarding how early childhood service providers communicate social accountability to a layered stakeholder ecosystem comprising children, families, educators, regulators, educational institutions, and the professional community. Drawing on Morsing and Schultz's (2006) three stakeholder communication strategies: information, response, and involvement -as descriptive analytical tools, this study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a document analysis design. The primary data source was NFC's 2025 Annual Report, purposively selected. Findings show stakeholder information as the most dominant form, spread across data on service reach, child and family support, sector contribution, and external recognition. Stakeholder response is represented minimally, limited to two data points: one quantitative parent-satisfaction indicator and one qualitative phrase, both without process explanation. Stakeholder involvement appears in different gradations depending on the type of partner: more explicit at the programme-development level with non-regulatory partners, as seen in the co-design of ZooSchool with Mandai Wildlife Group, co-developed training courses with polytechnics, and a leadership programme co-designed with a university; and more implicit in partnerships with the regulator, as seen in the Attendance Support Initiative with the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA), and in participation in professional sector forums. This study contributes to understanding social accountability practice in the ECE sector by demonstrating that the stakeholder involvement category is not homogeneous but varies by partner type, and that programme-level stakeholder involvement is not automatically equivalent to involvement in organizational communication processes.

Keywords: social responsibility communication; stakeholder; Early Childhood Education; social enterprise

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1. Introduction

Family trust in the institution *Early Childhood Education* (ECE) is not built solely by the quality of learning in the classroom, but also by how the institution communicates its broader role to the child, family, and community. Within the framework of developmental ecological theory, it is emphasized that child development cannot be understood independently of the layered relational systems around it, ranging from the family, educational institutions, to broader policies (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This understanding is relevant to read the ECE organization not as a single, stand-alone entity, but as a node in a network of relationships that influence and be influenced by various stakeholders (Epstein, 2002; Sheridan et al., 2010). This need becomes even more important when ECE organizers not only act as educational service providers, but also carry out social responsibilities for vulnerable groups, namely early childhood and families who need greater support (Borisova et al., 2019; Rey-Guerra et al., 2022). However, studies on how these social responsibilities are communicated by ECE organizers are still limited. Review of Aguinis and Glavas (2012) and Grace, Tao, and Rim bibliometric mapping (2020) Social responsibility communication research shows that academic attention is still concentrated in the corporate sector with high reputational risk, while the child-based social service sector is barely touched.

Early childhood education (ECE) is not only related to the child's learning process within educational institutions, but also relates to families, educators, governments, communities, and organizations that support children's development and well-being. Research on family partnerships in ECE shows that meaningful relationships between institutions and families require communication, collaboration, and opportunities for mutual contribution (Kambouri et al., 2022; Murphy et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2010). Rey Guerra et al. (2022) reinforcing this by showing that family involvement in learning activities at home and in ECE centres is closely related to child development. OECD report 2021 in series *Starting Strong* also emphasizes that meaningful interaction between ECE institutions, families, and communities is a prerequisite for the quality of cross-border early childhood services (OECD, 2021). In the context of Singapore, the development of services *Childcare* and *Preschool* Historically it has been formed through the involvement of various public and non-public actors, which shows that the implementation of early childhood services cannot be separated from the issues of access, quality, family support, professionalization of educators, and collaboration between institutions (Choo, 2010). As such, ECE organizations operate in a much broader stakeholder environment than just the relationship between the institution and the learner.

This context is relevant to NTUC First Campus (NFC), an early childhood education and services organisation in Singapore that has officially positioned itself as a *Social Enterprise*. The organization states that its social goals are not only related to the provision of educational and parenting services, but also support to children and families, including those who need greater support (NTUC First Campus, 2026). Literature on *Social Enterprise* shows that the main character of the organization lies in the effort to connect social goals with the organization's activities and operational sustainability (Berry, 2019; Bruder, 2021; Dees, 2018). *Social entrepreneurship* It is basically the process of creating social value through an innovative combination of resources (Mair & Marti, 2006), while Defourny and Nyssens (2010) indicates that conception *Social Enterprise* varies between institutional and policy contexts of the state. Lyon and Fernandez studies (2012) in the sector *early years* demonstrating that such organizations are able to expand their social impact through partnerships, networking and cross-agency training. NFC's dual position, as an ECE organizer at the same time *Social Enterprise*, making it a relevant case for understanding how social responsibility in the ECE sector is communicated to multi-layered stakeholders.

The problem then is not only whether NFC carries out socially beneficial activities, but how the social responsibility is communicated so that it can be understood and trusted by families and other ECE stakeholders. To read the process, this study borrows the stakeholder communication framework from the study of social responsibility communication, whose theoretical roots can be traced back to Freeman's classic 1984 stakeholder theory and Carroll's social responsibility pyramid framework (1991) (Freeman, 1984). The business value of CSR depends heavily on how the activity is communicated, not just on the activity itself (Du et al., 2010). A more specific framework developed by Morsing and Schultz (2006) through three stakeholder communication strategies, which were then enriched by discussions about its dialogical nature by Kent and Taylor (2002) in context *Public Relations*. The use of this framework needs to be done with caution because not every mention of stakeholders in an organisational report can be considered a form of responsible engagement (Greenwood, 2007; Noland & Phillips, 2010), and the concept of dialogue with stakeholders is often used too loosely in the literature (Acuti et al., 2024; Burchell & Cook, 2006). On the other hand, the ECE literature itself has not touched much on how ECE institutions, especially those with the status of ECE institutions, *Social Enterprise*, communicate its social accountability in a structured manner to broader stakeholders than just parents.

To close this gap, this study looks at how an ECE social *enterprise* organization communicates its social responsibility to stakeholders, using the three stakeholder communication strategies of Morsing and Schultz as reading tools. This approach allows the research to answer not just "what the ECE organization does", but "how the organization communicates its contributions to children, families,

and partners". This study takes NTUC First Campus (NFC) as a case study as the organization is one of the large-scale ECE organizers in Singapore that publicly publishes an official annual report that integrates information on educational services, family support, organizational achievements, and collaboration with various education partners.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze how the communication of social responsibility of NTUC First Campus, as an ECE organization, has the status of *Social Enterprise*, represented in the 2025 Annual Report. This research specifically answers three questions: (1) how information about the social contribution of NFC to children, families, and the ECE sector is represented; (2) how the experiences and responses of families or other stakeholders are represented; and (3) how stakeholder involvement in the development of ECE programs is represented, including distinguishing it from involvement in the organization's communication process. The novelty of this research lies in the use of a social responsibility communication lens to understand the accountability practices of an ECE organization to its ecosystem of stakeholders. Bronfenbrenner ecological framework (1979) and Epstein's school, family and community partnership framework (2002) becomes the conceptual basis for reading ECE as a layered relational system, as already mentioned above; the emphasis on two-way communication within the framework is also in line with the model of parent-practitioner partnership proposed by Kambouri et al. (2022).

Status *Social Enterprise* influence how an ECE institution carries out and views its social responsibilities. As outlined in, social mission alone is not enough to define *Social Entrepreneurship*; Organizations need to demonstrate normative integration between those missions and day-to-day operational practices (Bruder, 2021). Battilana and Lee (2014) adds a hybrid organizing perspective, i.e. how such an organization manages the tension between social logic and commercial logic simultaneously, a tension that is relevant to understanding how NFC positions its social responsibility alongside the operation of its ECE services.

Social responsibility communication as an analytical lens to read how social responsibility is communicated, this study borrows the development of CSR communication studies which is built on the basis of stakeholder theory that shifts the orientation of the organization from mere shareholders to all parties affected by their activities (Freeman, 1984). Subsequently, a social responsibility pyramid framework was developed that distinguishes economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities (Carroll, 1991). Dahlsrud (2008), through an analysis of 37 definitions of CSR, shows that stakeholder and social dimensions are almost always present in the conceptualization of CSR in various literatures. Integration can be done in the perspective of marketing with social responsibility, emphasizing the importance of communication in aligning stakeholder expectations (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004).

CSR communication research needs to be understood as a process of constructing meaning with stakeholders, not just the one-way transmission of information from the organization (Crane & Glozer, 2016). This needs to be considered in the aspect of communication strategy, where the choice of channels and messages can determine the extent to which CSR activities generate value for organizations and stakeholders (Du et al., 2010). Dhanesh (2015) strengthens the constructivist argument through a dialectical analysis of the construction of the meaning of CSR in the Indian context. These developments make the organization's reporting documents, such as *Annual Report*, is understood as a communication artifact that represents the organization's choice in telling its contribution. CSR communication practices are also influenced by the national business system in which the organization operates (Conte et al., 2020).

Application of Morsing and Schultz's three-strategy framework (2006) has been deepened through a Danish case study that shows the existence of a "Catch 22": organizations are required to communicate CSR actively, but risk being perceived as manipulative if they are too provocative (Morsing et al., 2008). Song and Wen (2019) Applying this framework to compare stakeholder engagement levels between controversial and non-controversial industries. Stocker et al. (2020) develop

a stakeholder engagement classification model that aligns with the three categories in the context of sustainability reporting, while Golob and Podnar's comprehensive review (2014) shows a shift in the focus of CSR communication studies from just information disclosure to a more complex relational process.

As previously emphasized, the application of this framework to ECE organizations requires caution, especially in the *Involvement*, because not every program partnership automatically means stakeholder involvement in the organization's communication process. Golob et al. (2013) adding that CSR dialogue in practice is often hampered by the power imbalance between organizations and stakeholders, an argument that is relevant to read the differences in the descriptions of NFC collaboration with non-regulatory partners and with regulators in the Results and Discussion section. To facilitate understanding, this article is organized into five sections. The first part outlines the background, research gaps, objectives, and literature review. The second part describes the research method. The third part presents the research results in detail based on three categories of stakeholder communication strategies. The fourth part presents a discussion that links the findings to theory, previous research, and their implications for ECE practice. The fifth section closes the article with the conclusions, contributions, and limitations of the research.

2. Methodology

This research is a qualitative descriptive research with a document analysis design (*Document Analysis*). The descriptive approach was chosen because the purpose of the research is to describe and map the pattern of representation of social responsibility communication in organizational documents, not to measure the frequency of category occurrence statistically or to test the cause-and-effect relationship between variables. Documents can be a systematic source of data in qualitative research if researchers select, examine, group, and interpret documents in a structured manner (Bowen, 2009). The grouping and interpretation process is carried out through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), with the three strategies of Morsing and Schultz (2006) used as a code framework (*Coding frame*) descriptive.

The main source of data for this study is the NTUC First Campus 2025 Annual Report entitled *Shaping the Future of Society*, which consists of 24 pages including the CEO's message, organizational achievement data, program description, and partnership and award narrative. This document was chosen purposively because it is an organizational official report that integrates information on preschool services, child and family support, sector development, human resource development, and relationships with partners (NTUC First Campus, 2026). The selection of documents was based on three criteria, namely: (1) it is an official document of the organization; (2) it covers the 2025 reporting period; and (3) it contains information about organizational activities related to social responsibility or stakeholders. This study did not use interviews or surveys because the research unit was limited to the representation of communication in the document.

The unit of analysis in this study is in the form of a communication segment in the Annual Report consisting of a program description, a statement of achievements, information about beneficiaries, a statement about stakeholder responses, and a description of collaboration or program development with other parties. A segment is only included in the unit of analysis if it is related to one of the five substantive aspects, namely support for children, support for families, access and inclusivity of services, capacity building in the ECE sector, or collaboration with stakeholders. These five aspects are derived from the combination of the Bronfenbrenner ecological framework (1979), Epstein's partnership framework (2002), and the identified dimensions of ECE stakeholders. Segments that are purely related to internal management without the involvement of external stakeholders are not included in the unit of analysis. The process of identifying and grouping segments in this study was carried out by one

researcher (*Single Coder*), a single segment is possible to be encoded into more than one category (*Multicoding*) when the segment simultaneously meets the criteria of more than one strategy. For example, the narrative of participation in a sector forum is coded as *Stakeholder Information* because it reports the achievement of contributions, as well as as *stakeholder involvement* because it shows a form of knowledge contribution to the external community. This rule is applied consistently across all relevant segments and is explicitly noted in the Results section.

To describe the pattern of representation, this study utilizes three descriptive categories derived from the Morsing and Schultz framework in 2006, namely: (1) *Stakeholder Information*, in the form of information about the activities, achievements, beneficiaries, scale, access, and social contributions submitted by the organization; (2) *Stakeholder Response*, in the form of representations regarding stakeholder experiences, responses, needs, or feedback; and (3) *Stakeholder Involvement*, in the form of evidence that stakeholders participate in the development, design, or implementation of organizational activities (Morsing et al., 2008).

The research process is carried out through four stages. First, reading the entire document, page by page, to gain a general understanding of the structure and content of the report, which is divided into five major parts: *Expanding Our Reach*, *Deepening Our Impact*, *Empowering Our People*, *Leading The Way*, and closing. Second, identifying relevant segments with the five substantive aspects that have been established in each section. Third, Grouping segments into three descriptive categories based on the suitability of the meaning of the text. Fourth, re-examining the context of each segment to ensure the suitability between the textual evidence and the established categories, before compiling a narrative description of the communication representation patterns found. This study did not perform statistical calculations on the distribution of categories because the purpose was to describe the representation patterns qualitatively, not to measure their quantitative proportions.

3. Results

A descriptive analysis of the NTUC First Campus Annual Report 2025 produced findings that were divided into three categories, namely *stakeholder information*, *stakeholder response*, and *stakeholder involvement*. The three were spread across all parts of the document, starting from the opening message of the *Chief Executive Officer*, the *Expanding Our Reach*, *Deepening Our Impact*, *Empowering Our People*, to *Leading The Way*.

3.1 Stakeholder Information

The stakeholder information category is the category with the widest distribution, the most diverse, and the most supported quantitative data in the entire document. The findings in this category can be sorted into six subthemes.

3.1.1 Reach and growth of preschool services.

In the opening section, CEO Justin Ang's message affirms that NFC "*remained focused on providing quality, accessible early childhood education while thoughtfully expanding how we support children and families beyond the early years*", a statement that serves as the narrative framework for all the data presented afterwards. Concrete data is then shown in the *Expanding Our Reach*: NFC section of the management of 184 preschools across Singapore through three service brands, namely *My First Skool*, *Little Skool House*, and *Changemakers Explorer*, which collectively serve around 30,000 children and families. Capacity growth was also specifically reported, with the addition of more than 1,100 new *preschool places in new and mature estates*, which are explicitly linked to efforts to expand access for young families.

3.1.2 Inclusivity and quality assurance.

On the aspect of language diversity, the document reports that more than 60% of NFC-managed centres offer programmes in Malay and Tamil, in addition to English, a data that is relevant to Singapore's multicultural context and confirms the organisation's position on the issue of linguistic accessibility. In terms of quality assurance, the document states that all *eligible centres* have obtained 100% SPARK certification, which is the nationally used quality standard in Singapore's ECE sector. In addition, two new developments were introduced to the core service: the launch of *Changemakers Explorer* with an inquiry-led and bilingual Symphonic Learning approach, and *Changemakers After-school* launched in January 2025 to support the needs of elementary school-age children through a *lifeskills* curriculum. *Outdoor School Singapore*, described as the largest outdoor learning provider for children aged 3-12, reports 8,800 children will be enrolled in holiday and *preschool* programs by 2025, including a new program titled *Southern Voyagers* that explores Singapore's history through adventure and teamwork.

3.1.3 Child and family support through the Child Support Model

The social dimension of NFC is communicated more specifically through *the Child Support Model*, a support framework described as encompassing four pillars: financial support, learning and development support, health and wellbeing support, and social support. This model is explicitly aimed at "*children with needs and lower-income families*". On the financial pillar, the document reports the disbursement of around S\$5 million per year through *the Bright Horizons Fund* (BHF), NFC's *charity arm*, with more than 8,000 children recorded to have received support by 2025. The document also includes an informative footnote that from 1 January 2026, BHF will be integrated into the *NTUC Enterprise Community Fund*. Two of BHF's flagship programmes are also described in detail: *the You've Got Talent programme*, which provides access to enrichment for children from low-income families to develop their interests and strengths; and *the Families & School Together* programme, which engages children and *My First Skool* families in SG60-themed activities to strengthen family bonds and shared learning.

3.1.4 Native language attendance and literacy support

On the issue of children's attendance in preschool services, NFC developed a storybook titled "*Little Chick Goes to School Too!*" for children in grades N1 to K2, which is designed to help families understand the importance of regular attendance for children's social, cognitive, and emotional development. The initiative reportedly reached more than 930 children from 8 *My First Skool* centers. On the issue of celebrating national identity and language, NFC launched the storybook "*Happy Birthday to You*" in three mother tongues (Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil) for children at K1 and K2 levels, accompanied by an original song titled "*I Fell in Love with Singapore!*" (我爱上一个岛) in commemoration of SG60. The document states that the material was developed by NFC's internal curriculum specialists and "*was well-received*", an indication of a positive response despite the lack of supporting quantitative data.

3.1.5 Contribution to the development of the ECE sector

NFC reports on the contributions of its educators at various academic and professional forums throughout 2025, namely *the PECERA 2025 Conference in Shanghai*, *the Preschool Seminar 2025*, *the 76th OMEP Conference in Italy*, *the Early Childhood Celebrations & Conference (ECCC) 2025*, *the EduTech Asia Conference 2025*, and *the 2025 NUS Child Conference*. This participation is described as a form of sharing *best practices* and research insights that "*extended practical knowledge beyond our centres and underscored our leadership in advancing the sector*". In the realm of more formal educator

capacity building, the document also reports the development of new training courses with *Temasek Polytechnic* and *Singapore Polytechnic* aimed at supporting the wider ECE community.

3.1.6 External recognition and rewards

As a form of information on the legitimacy and credibility of the organization, the document reported a number of awards: NFC was named one of the *Best Companies to Work for in Asia* for the seventh consecutive year at the *HR Asia Awards 2025*, and received the *Most Caring Company Award 2025*. At the individual and work unit level, NFC reported the acquisition of seven ECDA Awards with the names of recipients specifically mentioned, including the categories of *Outstanding Preschool Educator*, *Outstanding Early Years Educator*, *Promising Early Years Educator*, *Outstanding Centre for Teaching and Learning*, and *Promising/Outstanding Early Childhood Leader*. In addition, it was reported that five awards were given at the *Preschool Chinese Language Storytelling Aids Competition*, three awards at the *Thumbs Up Little Junior Nursery Rhyme Competition*, and the *Leading Foundation Teacher Award 2025*. At the institutional and non-educator network level, *My First Skool* reportedly won Top Brand status in the Pre-School category from *Influential Brands* as well as a *Gold Award* at the *Singapore Landscape Architectural Awards 2025*, while *Outdoor School Singapore* won recognition including *HundrED Global Collection 2025* and six *School Green Awards 2025*.

3.1.7 Investment in human resource development

Investment in human resource development was also reported as part of the organisation's capacity narrative, although it was more internally oriented (educators) rather than direct external stakeholders: expanding the adoption of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) to all staff accompanied by structured training; *My First Skool Festival* involving more than 5,000 educators; the *Early Childhood Education Leadership (ECEL) programme* co-designed with the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS); and *Learning Journeys* in the form of study abroad to learn about leading ECE practices. Although internally oriented, this data is still relevant to be noted as part of *stakeholder information* because it shows how NFC communicates investments in educator capacity as part of its narrative of responsibility for the quality of child services.

3.2 Stakeholder Response

In contrast to the abundance of evidence in the previous category, the evidence in the *stakeholder response* category is very limited both in terms of quantity and depth of explanation. The document only lists two data points: one explicit quantitative indicator, namely the level of parental satisfaction reported to be above 9 on a scale of 10. The explicit quantitative indicator, i.e. the level of parental satisfaction reported to be above 9 on a scale of 10, appears in the *Expanding Our Reach* section side by side with other service-scale data. The indicator is present without any methodological context: the document does not mention the number of respondents surveyed, the period of the survey being conducted, the instruments used, or the proportion of parents of the total service recipients who participated in the measurement.

The second data point is an indication of another qualitative response that can be identified is the phrase "*which was well-received*" in the launch description of the SG60 song and storybook. However, this phrase also does not include an explanation of who provided the response (parents, children, educators, or the general public), how the response was measured or collected, or the more concrete form of the response. Further exploration of the entire document also did not find an explanation of the follow-up mechanism of the two indicators above, such as whether the results of the satisfaction survey were used to change certain policies, what programs were revised based on parental input, or how the organization communicated the results of the follow-up back to the stakeholders who provided the response. There was also no narrative of complaints, criticisms, or aspects that were considered

unsatisfactory by any stakeholder throughout the 24 pages of the document and all representations of responses were affirmative without exception.

3.3 Stakeholder Involvement

The *stakeholder involvement* category shows a different pattern from the previous two categories: the number of examples is much smaller than *the information*, but the quality of the description in some cases is more explicit about the collaborative process that occurs. The findings in this category can be distinguished into different levels of engagement, including:

3.3.1 Involvement at the co-design and co-development level of the program

The strongest findings relate to the *ZooSchool* program, which was launched on May 16, 2025 with Mandai Wildlife Group as "*Asia's first ZooSchool*". The document specifically states that the program is "*co-designed by educators from both organisations*", a phrase that explicitly mentions the involvement of educators from both sides in the curriculum design process that blends classroom learning with hands-on exploration of nature and wildlife. In the area of educator capacity building, the document reports a new training course "*developed with Temasek Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic*", indicating a process of co-development of the training curriculum, rather than simply the purchase or adoption of programmes from the higher education institution. In the area of internal leadership development, the ECEL programme is described as "*a one of a kind, one year programme co-designed with the Singapore University of Social Sciences*", an academic partnership that results in a leadership certification programme for NFC educators.

3.3.2 Engagement at the policy and regulator partnership level

In a different realm, NFC reported its involvement in the *Attendance Support Initiative*, a pilot program with the *Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)*, the ECE sector regulator in Singapore. Within the framework of this partnership, NFC developed the storybook "*Little Chick Goes to School Too!*" as a joint intervention instrument. In contrast to the previous two examples that explicitly use the terms "*co-designed*" or "*developed with*", this description of the partnership with ECDA uses a more implicit phrase, "*as part of a pilot Attendance Support Initiative with*", a choice of words that indicates the regulator's involvement in the initiative, but not as clear as the previous two *co-design* examples regarding the division of roles in the development process.

3.3.3 Engagement at the sector's knowledge-sharing level

The participation of NFC educators in six academic and professional forums (PECERA, OMEP, ECCC, EduTech Asia, NUS Child Conference, and Preschool Seminar) can be understood as a form of involvement that is different from *program co-design* and policy partnerships. In these forums, NFC plays the role of a contributor of knowledge to the broader community of ECE professionals, rather than as a party that develops programs with specific partners. This type of involvement is more accurately understood as *an outward disclosure of expertise than involvement* in the sense of two-way collaboration as defined by Morsing and Schultz (2006), as the document does not explain whether these forums generate feedback that then influences NFC practices, or whether they are merely a one-way channel for the dissemination of NFC to the sector community.

4. Discussion

The results show a very non-uniform communication configuration between the three categories: *information*: dominates almost all parts of the document with six different subthemes, *response*: has a low and barely representative ratio, except for two minimum data points, while *involvement*: although limited in number, can show interesting internal variations between explicit (*co-design*) and more

ambiguous (regulatory partnerships, sector forums). This configuration is the result of a systematic identification and grouping process carried out on all 24 pages of the Annual Report, as described in detail in the Results section.

Dominance Stakeholder Information confirms the findings of Morsing and Schultz in 2006 and Morsing, Schultz, and Nielsen in 2008, which place information strategy as the most basic and most common form of CSR communication found in formal reporting documents. These findings are also in line with those of Stocker, Arruda, and Boaventura (2020), which found similar patterns in the sustainability reports of other organizations outside the education sector. However, the study also expands the framework by showing that the *stakeholder involvement* it turns out to be inhomogeneous, this is due to the discovery of different gradations of process clarity depending on the type of partners involved (non-governmental partners such as Mandai Wildlife Group and SUSS versus regulators such as ECDA). This kind of gradation has not been widely discussed in the previous CSR communication literature, which tends to treat *Involvement* as a single category without internal differentiation (Golob & Podnar, 2014).

These findings also challenge implicit assumptions in some of the literature *Social Enterprise* which tend to equate the existence of partnerships with meaningful stakeholder engagement (Lyon & Fernandez, 2012). With reference to the framework *Hybrid Organizing* Battilana and Lee (2014), this difference in diction can be read as an indication that the equivalence of the social-educational logic between the NFC and its nongovernmental partners allows for the representation of *Co-design* are more explicit in the document, while the relationship with regulators tends to be represented more implicitly. However, these diction differences need to be read carefully as textual representations in the Annual Report, not as direct evidence of power relations or equality in actual collaborative practices, as reporting documents cannot prove the negotiation process behind them nor the organization's willingness to be truly influenced by its partners as required by true dialogue according to Kent and Taylor (2002).

Theoretically, these findings open up space to propose tentatively, that the category of stakeholder involvement within the framework of Morsing and Schultz (2006) potentially further broken down into sub-dimensions based on the type of partner. This proposal is preliminary conceptual derived from a single document and a case analysis, so it requires further testing on a broader data corpus before it can be claimed as a well-established theoretical contribution. This contribution can provide a conceptual understanding of the *Involvement* which has been tested more in the context of commercial corporations (Song & Wen, 2019; Stocker et al., 2020) and has not been widely applied to hybrid organizations such as *Social Enterprise* in the child-based social services sector. In addition, this research enriches the application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1979) and the Epstein partnership framework (2002) in a new realm, namely the analysis of organizational reporting documents, which was previously more applied to the study of direct family-school interaction.

This study has implications for four stakeholder groups, namely for educators and managers of ECE institutions, these findings confirm the importance of documenting the process of family involvement explicitly and not just on indicators of satisfaction rates, following the Epstein partnership model (2002) and Kambouri et al. (2022). For the researcher, this study offers an analytical framework that can be replicated to compare social responsibility communication patterns in other ECE organizers, both in status *Social Enterprise* and non-profits, in a variety of country contexts. For policymakers, particularly ECE sector regulators, the findings on asymmetric relationships in partnerships with ECDA indicate the need to encourage more explicit reporting standards on the collaborative process between operators and regulators, not just the outcomes of the program. For social stakeholders at large, including non-governmental partners and communities, the practice of *Co-design* such as *ZooSchool* and *ECEL* can be a reference model of partnership that can be replicated in the context of other cross-sector collaborations.

For PAUD institutions in Indonesia in particular, the case of NFC offers several practical lessons even though the regulatory context and scale of the two are different. First, PAUD institutions can begin to document parental satisfaction and input more transparently in annual reports or reports on the institution's activities, not just as a single number, but accompanied by a description of the collection and follow-up methods. Second, the partnership of PAUD institutions with external parties, both with education agencies, community organizations, and non-governmental partners such as non-governmental organizations or the business world, and this can be reported by explicitly distinguishing between partnerships at the program development level (*co-design*) and simply mentioning the name of partners, as exemplified by the difference in the descriptions of ZooSchool and Attendance Support Initiative in NFC. Third, the framework of three questions (*what is communicated, how responses are considered, and the extent to which involvement occurs*) can be adapted by PAUD institutions in Indonesia as a simple guide in compiling more accountable annual reports to parents and the community, in line with the accreditation and transparency demands of PAUD institutions.

This research deliberately focused the scope of its analysis on one Annual Report as an official document of the organization, so that the findings represent how the NFC chooses to communicate its social responsibility through that channel in depth. This focus opens up promising development space for future research, such as triangulating through interviews with parents, educators, and organizational partners to enrich understanding of how representation in documents intersects with relational experiences in the field. Other development potential opens up through year-to-year comparisons of the Annual Report or between similar ECE organizations, which can test the consistency and evolution of social responsibility communication patterns over time. In addition, future research may expand the analysis on NFC's other communication channels, such as social media or official websites, to map how the three stakeholder communication strategies operate across platforms more comprehensively. These developments will enrich the analytical framework that has been built in this study, as well as expand the understanding of social accountability practices in the ECE sector more fully.

Overall, this discussion confirms that stakeholder involvement at the program development level is not automatically equivalent to involvement at the level of organizational communication to the family, a distinction that refines the application of the Morsing and Schultz frameworks (2006) in the context of ECE status *Social Enterprise*. These findings open up space for the development of more contextual social accountability theories and practices for the early childhood education sector.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that NTUC First Campus's social responsibility communication in the 2025 Annual Report is represented through three patterns with very different depth and diversity of evidence. *Stakeholder information* is the most dominant pattern, spread across six different subthemes ranging from service reach, inclusivity, Child Support Model, literacy and attendance, sector contribution, to external recognition. *Stakeholder responses* are very minimal, only through two data points without an explanation of the process, so it is not enough to prove the existence of complete two-way communication. Meanwhile, *stakeholder involvement* shows more substantive but graded evidence, from explicit *co-design* of programs (ZooSchool, ECEL, polytechnic training) to more implicit regulatory partnerships (Attendance Support Initiative with ECDA).

The main contribution of this study lies in the assertion that the categories of *stakeholder involvement* themselves are not homogeneous, and have different gradations of process clarity depending on the type of partner involved and that involvement at the level of program development does not automatically reflect involvement at the level of organizational communication with family. This distinction is important for the development of social accountability practices in the ECE sector,

especially for organizations with social enterprise status that need to communicate their contributions to the multi-layered stakeholder ecosystem.

This study has a number of limitations. First, the analysis focused on one Annual Report in the year referred to as an official document of the organization, so that the findings represent how NFC chooses to communicate its social responsibility through that channel, rather than the entire NFC communication practice outside of the document. Second, the encoding process was carried out by a single researcher without *an intercoder reliability check*, so that the consistency of interpretation is more maintained through repeated re-examination of the context of each segment. Further research can overcome these limitations through triangulation with interviews with parents, educators, and organizational partners; comparison of Annual Reports between years or between similar ECE organizations to test the consistency and evolution of social responsibility communication patterns; and the expansion of the analysis on other communication channels owned by NFC, such as social media or official websites.

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