Research Article

Group Cohesiveness of Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC) Bekasi Region in Building a Positive Community Image

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Abstract: Football is far more than a game; it is a cultural language that brings people together across nations and generations. In Indonesia, this passion for football extends beyond domestic leagues, where local supporters also form strong communities around international clubs. One of these is the Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC) Bekasi Region, a collective of Chelsea FC fans who not only share admiration for the team but also nurture social bonds and a sense of belonging within their community. This paper offers a conceptual exploration of how cohesiveness among members of CISC Bekasi contributes to the creation of a positive community image. Building on ideas from scholars such as Mulyana (2016), Collins and Raven (in Arifuddin, 2016), and Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018), the discussion focuses on the role of group communication in fostering solidarity and collective identity. Within the group, communication is not limited to exchanging information but also functions as a medium for emotional support, shared values, and moral responsibility.

The argument put forward is that effective communication and social cohesion can transform a fan club into a respected social group that embodies unity and positive representation. The experience of CISC Bekasi illustrates how sports enthusiasm, when supported by strong interpersonal ties, can encourage inclusive participation and strengthen the public image of football supporter communities in Indonesia.

Keywords: Group Cohesiveness; Interpersonal Communication; Fan Community; Positive Image; CISC Bekasi.

1. Introduction

Football occupies a unique position in modern society, not only as a sport but also as a medium of social identity, collective expression, and community building. Across the world, football unites millions of people under shared colors and symbols, producing emotional ties that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries. For many, being a football fan means being part of something larger than oneself—a global community bound by passion, loyalty, and ritual. This sense of belonging is not merely symbolic; it is embedded in everyday practices such as watching matches together, participating in online discussions, and organizing social events.

In Indonesia, football culture has grown into a deeply rooted social phenomenon. Support for both local and international clubs has given rise to a vast landscape of fan-based communities spread across the archipelago. While local club supporters such as The Jakmania (Persija Jakarta) and Bobotoh (Persib Bandung) dominate the domestic scene, communities of international club fans—particularly those supporting teams from the English Premier League—are equally vibrant. Among them are groups like Manchester United Supporters Club Indonesia (MUSCI), Juventus Official Fans Club Indonesia (JOFCI), and the Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC). Each community serves as a space for social interaction, collective identity, and emotional expression centered around

the love for football.

The Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC) was established as a platform for Chelsea FC supporters to gather, share enthusiasm, and build networks among fans across the country. Over the years, CISC has developed regional branches in numerous Indonesian cities, one of which is located in Bekasi. The Bekasi regional chapter—commonly referred to as CISC Bekasi—has become one of the most active and cohesive branches, engaging in regular activities such as nonton bareng (match screenings), futsal tournaments, and annual gatherings. Through these shared experiences, members not only express their admiration for Chelsea FC but also form deep interpersonal connections that extend beyond football itself.

Such activities are not merely recreational. They function as communicative events that reinforce group identity and strengthen emotional ties among members. In sociological and communication terms, these interactions cultivate what scholars call group cohesiveness—a psychological and social bond that encourages individuals to remain committed to their group. As Collins and Raven (in Arifuddin, 2016) describe, cohesiveness is the force that keeps members within a group and prevents them from leaving it. In other words, cohesiveness transforms a group of individuals into a community with shared values, mutual trust, and a sense of belonging.

Within the context of football fandom, cohesiveness is essential to sustaining community engagement and collective identity. Supporters' clubs thrive not only because of their shared passion for a team but also because of the communication and solidarity that exist among members. According to Mulyana (2016), a group is defined by its members' ability to recognize one another, interact meaningfully, and pursue common goals. This process of communication—verbal and nonverbal, online and offline—serves as the foundation for maintaining unity. In CISC Bekasi, regular gatherings, discussions, and digital interactions play a crucial role in building that sense of unity.

However, the significance of group cohesiveness extends beyond internal solidarity. In Indonesia, football supporter communities have often been stereotyped negatively, sometimes associated with rivalry and conflict. Against this backdrop, groups like CISC Bekasi seek to build a more positive image of football supporters by emphasizing friendship, respect, and shared responsibility. Their consistent engagement in social and sporting events—often open to other communities—helps project an image of a disciplined, constructive, and socially responsible fan organization. This effort aligns with what Frank Jefkins (in Maulyan et al., 2022) defines as positive image—a perception shaped by consistent actions and attitudes that reflect integrity and goodwill.

CISC Bekasi's activities reflect this image-building process. The group's communication practices demonstrate that cohesiveness is not merely emotional but also strategic. Through structured interactions, members exchange information, make collective decisions, and negotiate group identity. As Banunaek et al. (2021) note, group communication is a process involving three or more individuals who collaborate to achieve common objectives. In such contexts, effective communication fosters unity and directs group energy toward shared goals, such as maintaining harmony, organizing events, or representing the community in public.

Moreover, the emergence of CISC Bekasi highlights the growing importance of brand community in the study of communication and identity. According to Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018), a brand community is a specialized group of individuals who are connected not by location but by shared interest in a particular brand or entity. Members develop a consciousness of kind, uphold shared rituals and traditions, and possess a sense of moral responsibility toward the group. In this sense, CISC Bekasi can be viewed as a brand community revolving around Chelsea FC, where the football club functions as the brand and the supporters' collective identity serves as the brand culture. Through their interaction, fans construct a social narrative that represents both their loyalty to the club and their role within the broader Indonesian football culture.

The study of group cohesiveness within fan communities, therefore, is not only relevant to sports communication but also to understanding how identity and image are constructed in modern social organizations. The cohesiveness of CISC Bekasi illustrates how communication, shared values, and emotional attachment contribute to both internal stability and external perception. When cohesiveness is high, members identify strongly with the community, participate actively in its activities, and represent it positively in public spaces. Conversely, weak cohesiveness can lead to fragmentation, reduced participation, and the erosion of collective identity.

This article aims to conceptually explore how group cohesiveness in CISC Bekasi functions as a communicative and social mechanism for building a positive community

image. It does not focus on quantitative measurement but instead synthesizes existing theories and prior studies to understand the dynamics between communication, cohesiveness, and image formation. By reflecting on the experience of CISC Bekasi, this paper seeks to demonstrate that sports fan communities can serve as models of constructive social engagement when supported by effective communication and shared identity.

Ultimately, the discussion contributes to broader conversations about how local fan organizations navigate the dual roles of being passionate supporters and responsible community actors. It also offers insights into how group communication theory and brand community concepts intersect in shaping social behavior. In highlighting CISC Bekasi's cohesiveness, the paper underscores that football fandom—often dismissed as mere entertainment—can in fact become a space for learning, collaboration, and civic participation.

2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review

Group Communication

Communication is the heartbeat of every social group. It is through communication that people exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, and maintain their relationships. In the context of a community, communication is not simply about the transfer of information but about creating shared understanding and collective identity. Mulyana (2016) defines communication as a process of sharing meaning, where individuals attempt to interpret and respond to each other's messages in ways that sustain social bonds. Without continuous communication, even the most enthusiastic community can easily lose coherence and purpose.

Group communication refers to the interaction that takes place among three or more people who share a common goal. According to Banunaek et al. (2021), group communication functions as a medium for members to discuss, plan, and execute collective actions while also managing interpersonal relationships. In this sense, communication becomes both the tool and the outcome of the group's social process. When members engage actively and respectfully, communication helps cultivate trust, empathy, and a sense of belonging.

Within football fan communities like CISC Bekasi, group communication manifests in multiple forms—verbal discussions during gatherings, online exchanges through social media, and nonverbal expressions of solidarity such as wearing club jerseys or participating in collective chants. Each act of communication reinforces the feeling of being part of the same collective. As Raymond Ross (in Supriatno & Romadhon, 2017) suggests, communication allows people to align their thoughts and behaviors toward shared meaning, transforming a group from a loose association of individuals into a cohesive social entity.

Group communication also performs several important functions. William I. Gorden (in Mulyana, 2016) identifies four primary ones: instrumental, social, expressive, and ritual. The instrumental function involves persuading or informing others to achieve specific objectives; the social function maintains relationships; the expressive function allows individuals to share emotions; and the ritual function reinforces shared traditions and values. CISC Bekasi's activities—such as weekly futsal games, communal match viewings, and annual gatherings—fulfill all these functions simultaneously. They inform, connect, express, and celebrate the group's shared identity as Chelsea supporters.

Moreover, group communication plays a critical role in decision-making and conflict resolution. Through discussion and negotiation, members learn to appreciate differing viewpoints and reach consensus on collective goals. These interactions not only maintain harmony within the community but also demonstrate democratic communication practices that reflect maturity and respect. Such communication behaviors directly influence the community's cohesiveness and its reputation among other football supporter groups.

Group Cohesiveness

Group cohesiveness, or the degree of unity among group members, is a vital element of successful community life. Forsyth (in Nababan, 2022) describes it as the total force that binds members to their group and motivates them to remain part of it. Cohesiveness is not an abstract concept; it can be seen in shared laughter, mutual support, and the

willingness of members to dedicate time and energy to the group's activities.

According to Collins and Raven (in Arifuddin, 2016), group cohesiveness is a psychological force that encourages individuals to stay within the group and resist separation. This bond is emotional as much as it is social—it arises from friendship, trust, and collective pride. Williams (in Sholeh, 2017) similarly views cohesiveness as the extent to which members enjoy being part of a group and value their interactions with one another. When cohesiveness is strong, individuals are motivated to contribute positively to the group's goals.

Forsyth (in Nababan, 2022) identifies four dimensions of cohesiveness: social attraction, group unity, cooperation, and sense of belonging.

Social attraction refers to the interpersonal affection that binds members together.

Group unity reflects a shared sense of purpose and identity.

Cooperation involves collaboration toward collective goals.

Belongingness indicates members' emotional attachment and identification with the group.

All these dimensions can be observed within CISC Bekasi. The members share an emotional connection rooted in their mutual admiration for Chelsea FC; they unite under the identity of being "CISC Bekasi"; they cooperate in organizing events; and they express belonging through constant communication and loyalty to the group's activities.

A high level of cohesiveness often leads to stability and resilience. Members who feel emotionally attached to their group are less likely to disengage when facing challenges. In contrast, low cohesiveness can cause fragmentation, reduced motivation, and eventual decline of the community. Therefore, maintaining cohesiveness is an ongoing process that depends heavily on communication, empathy, and shared goals.

Community and Brand Community

The concept of community has long been central to social science discussions. George and Hillery (in Ramadhani, 2020) define a community as a group of people who share common interests, needs, and often a geographical space. However, in modern society, communities increasingly form not because of physical proximity but because of shared passion or identity. Such communities, often referred to as communities of interest, can exist both online and offline.

Football fan clubs like CISC Bekasi exemplify this transformation. While its members may come from diverse backgrounds and locations, they are united by the same enthusiasm for Chelsea FC. As Jermias and Rahman (2022) explain, a community is not only defined by its place but also by its collective commitment to common values and activities. The shared rituals—watching matches together, celebrating victories, wearing blue jerseys—build a symbolic world that members inhabit together.

Closely related to this is the idea of the brand community, introduced by Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018). A brand community is a social group formed around a shared admiration for a brand, product, or institution. It is characterized by three essential elements: shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility. In the case of CISC Bekasi, these elements are clearly present. Members recognize each other as part of the same "family" of Chelsea supporters (shared consciousness); they engage in consistent collective practices like watching matches and organizing events (rituals); and they feel a moral duty to maintain the group's good name (moral responsibility).

From this perspective, CISC Bekasi can be viewed not only as a social group but also as an extension of Chelsea FC's brand identity. The community acts as a living representation of the club's values—loyalty, teamwork, and respect. This alignment between brand and community demonstrates how sports fandom can serve as a form of participatory culture, where fans actively shape and reinterpret the meaning of the brand they love.

Brand Image and Positive Community Perception

The term brand image refers to the perception held by the public toward a brand, organization, or group. According to Kotler (in Anjasmoro & Mawardi, 2017), brand image represents the collective associations and memories that people attach to a particular entity. Alvionita (in Varidah et al., 2023) adds that brand image is shaped by the accumulation of experiences and impressions that individuals have over time. When these impressions are positive, they lead to stronger loyalty and reputation.

In the context of communities, a positive image serves as a form of social capital. Frank Jefkins (in Maulyan et al., 2022) defines image as the impression that others hold about an organization or individual, whether favorable or not. Building a positive image, therefore, requires consistent behavior that reflects reliability, cooperation, and goodwill. For CISC Bekasi, this means demonstrating that football supporters can be disciplined, inclusive, and socially responsible—contrary to the stereotypes that often label fans as unruly or aggressive.

The connection between cohesiveness and community image is evident. A cohesive group tends to project unity and purpose, which in turn enhances its reputation. When members communicate respectfully, support each other, and engage in meaningful activities, outsiders perceive the group as harmonious and trustworthy. Conversely, internal conflicts or miscommunication can quickly damage a community's public standing.

Brand image within a community context also performs three main functions (Boush & Jones in Mahiri, 2020): as an entry point for public engagement, as a source of added value, and as a repository of shared values. These functions align with how CISC Bekasi operates. Its welcoming attitude attracts new members (entry point), its reputation as a friendly and organized fan group adds credibility (added value), and its long-standing culture of solidarity preserves core values for future generations (value repository).

Synthesis of Previous Studies

A number of studies have examined the role of communication and cohesiveness in sustaining community life. Setiawan and Fitriawati (2022) found that open and direct communication among members of a BMW car community strengthened interpersonal bonds and ensured the group's long-term existence. Similarly, Jefry et al. (2024) observed that the Vespa Scoots.ID community in Palembang maintained high solidarity due to strong cohesiveness and a sense of familial belonging. Other works, such as Soleh (2019) on the Islamic Film Lovers Community and Fachrezi & Triwardhani (2022) on the Cinta Wisata group, highlight that structured group communication encourages harmony and cooperation.

Although these studies differ in focus and subject matter, they share a common conclusion: communication and cohesiveness are inseparable in the development of positive social groups. In the same vein, Pratami and Nurbani (2017) showed that the WomanDiri community used group communication not only for collaboration but also for empowerment and education. These findings collectively support the argument that effective communication is the foundation upon which cohesiveness and positive image are built.

3. Proposed Method

Conceptual Approach

This article employs a conceptual qualitative approach, drawing from theories of communication, group cohesiveness, and brand community to explain how a football supporter community develops and maintains a positive public image. Rather than collecting empirical data, the paper integrates existing scholarly perspectives to construct a theoretical model of how internal communication and cohesiveness interact within a community setting.

The conceptual approach is particularly relevant to social phenomena like football fandom, where emotional bonds, shared practices, and symbolic identities play crucial roles. As Kriyantono (2022) notes, qualitative inquiry aims to explore meaning and interpretation within social contexts, emphasizing understanding over measurement. By focusing on the experiences and behaviors reflected in previous studies and theoretical frameworks, this paper aims to build a deeper interpretation of the mechanisms that sustain CISC Bekasi as a cohesive and positively perceived fan community.

Conceptually, this study situates itself at the intersection of group communication

theory (Mulyana, 2016), group cohesiveness theory (Collins & Raven in Arifuddin, 2016), and brand community theory (Muniz & O'Guinn in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018). These perspectives collectively provide the foundation for understanding how communication processes contribute to solidarity and how that solidarity shapes external perceptions.

Analytical Framework

The analytical framework guiding this conceptual study is built around three interconnected dimensions:

Communication as the foundation of group interaction.
Communication acts as the medium through which meanings are shared, norms are negotiated, and group identity is maintained. It involves both verbal and nonverbal exchanges that express solidarity, trust, and shared emotion. Within communities like CISC Bekasi, communication extends beyond physical meetings to include online interactions through social media platforms. These constant exchanges reinforce social presence and strengthen group coherence.

Cohesiveness as the outcome of communication.
Drawing from Forsyth (in Nababan, 2022), cohesiveness is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct involving emotional attraction, shared unity, cooperation, and belonging. In this framework, communication is viewed as the central process that generates these dimensions. When members communicate frequently and constructively, they create a collective emotional climate that fosters commitment and group loyalty.

Community image as the social reflection of cohesiveness.
The third dimension involves how internal cohesiveness manifests externally as community image. According to Jefkins (in Maulyan et al., 2022), image is the impression held by the public about an organization or group. A cohesive and communicative community naturally projects reliability, friendliness, and inclusiveness—qualities that shape positive public perception.

These three dimensions operate in a cyclical relationship: communication fosters cohesiveness, cohesiveness strengthens community identity, and identity reinforces positive image. This cyclical dynamic forms the core of the analytical framework applied to understand CISC Bekasi's development as a socially respected supporter group.

Theoritical Integration

To articulate this conceptual model more clearly, several theoretical perspectives are integrated:

Group Communication Theory

According to Mulyana (2016), communication in a group is a process of mutual exchange where meaning is negotiated and consensus is built. This process involves continuous interaction that maintains the unity of the group. In fan communities, group communication not only facilitates coordination but also symbolizes belonging. Activities such as group discussions, collaborative events, and social media engagement reinforce both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of membership.

Communication also carries symbolic power. Verbal expressions like chants or slogans, and nonverbal cues such as club colors or gestures, function as identifiers of belonging. These shared symbols strengthen the "in-group" perception (Saleh, 2016), which helps members distinguish themselves from outsiders while deepening internal solidarity.

Group Cohesiveness Theory

Forsyth's (in Nababan, 2022) framework of group cohesiveness emphasizes the motivational and emotional dimensions that hold members together. This theory explains why individuals maintain membership even without material incentives—because emotional satisfaction and shared meaning compensate for the absence of tangible rewards.

In the context of CISC Bekasi, the cohesiveness stems from a mixture of emotional and symbolic elements: pride in supporting Chelsea FC, friendship among members, and a sense of moral duty to preserve the community's good name. As Collins and Raven (in Arifuddin, 2016) argue, cohesiveness acts as a psychological force that prevents members from leaving and encourages them to contribute actively.

Brand Community Theory

Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018) conceptualize a brand community as a group of individuals connected through shared admiration for a brand and a set of collective practices. Three core elements define such communities: consciousness of kind, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility. When applied to CISC Bekasi, these elements are clearly visible: members recognize each other as part of a unique "family" of Chelsea fans; they uphold traditions such as watching matches and holding gatherings; and they demonstrate moral responsibility by maintaining respectful behavior and social participation.

This theoretical lens provides a bridge between individual emotion and social structure. It shows how personal attachment to a brand or symbol (in this case, Chelsea FC) can evolve into collective identity and organized community behavior.

Conceptual Model

Data were collected using three main techniques—**observation, interviews, and**
documentation—to ensure data richness and triangulation.

Observation

1) Observation was conducted both online and offline.

2) Online observation focused on the content uploaded by @dyputustudio, including video types, posting frequency, audience engagement (likes, comments, shares), and interactive patterns.

3) Offline observation involved visiting Dyputu Studio's physical location to observe customer experiences, service procedures, and behind-the-scenes interactions that influence the creation of digital content.

This method enabled the researcher to capture how promotional strategies on TikTok align with real-world studio operations and consumer interactions.

Interviews

The study utilized semi-structured interviews to gather detailed, flexible, and in-depth data. This format allowed the researcher to explore key themes while adapting questions based on participants' responses. The interviews with the key informant (owner) focused on topics such as:

1) The motivation behind using TikTok as a promotional platform.

2) The content strategy and creative process.

3) Engagement techniques and responses to consumer feedback.

4) The perceived impact of TikTok promotion on studio visibility and customer

flow. Meanwhile, the supporting informants (followers/customers) were asked

about:

Their perception of Dyputu Studio's TikTok content.

1) The reasons they engage (like, comment, share) with the account.

2) How online interaction influenced their decision to visit or recommend the studio.

3) The combination of both perspectives provided a balanced understanding of the communication process and relational dynamics between the brand and its audience.

Documentation

Documentation complemented the other data collection methods by analyzing:

1) TikTok analytics (follower count, video engagement metrics).

2) Screenshots and archives of comments and audience interactions.

3) Promotional visuals (videos, posters, and logos).

4) Transcriptions of interviews and field notes.

This documentation served as evidence of the patterns and behaviors observed in the study, contributing to data triangulation and credibility.

Conceptual Justification

The choice to use a conceptual framework rather than empirical fieldwork is justified for several reasons. First, football supporter communities have been the subject of numerous case studies (Setiawan & Fitriawati, 2022; Jefry et al., 2024; Soleh, 2019), all of which underline the same theoretical pattern—communication leads to cohesiveness, and cohesiveness leads to positive outcomes. By synthesizing these findings, this paper focuses on deepening theoretical understanding rather than repeating descriptive observations.

Second, CISC Bekasi represents a relevant and illustrative case within the Indonesian context. Its structure, activities, and reputation provide an ideal example of how global sports fandom adapts to local culture. Studying such a case conceptually allows for broader reflection on the relationship between communication, identity, and image formation without being limited by the specifics of time or participant sampling.

Finally, conceptual work contributes to theory building. By mapping existing concepts into a coherent model, it offers an interpretive framework that future researchers can test empirically. As Mustafa et al. (2022) note, qualitative analysis often begins with conceptual exploration that later evolves into grounded or empirical study. The present paper thus serves as a foundational stage for more detailed research on fan community communication in Indonesia.

Expected Contribution

Through this conceptual framework, the paper seeks to make two key contributions. First, it extends the application of communication and cohesiveness theories into the field of sports fandom and community image studies. While previous research has examined similar relationships in car clubs or tourism communities, applying these ideas to football supporter groups introduces new cultural and emotional dynamics.

Second, the paper provides a constructive narrative about football fans in Indonesia. By highlighting CISC Bekasi's cohesive and positive image, it challenges stereotypes that often portray supporters as sources of conflict or disorder. Instead, it emphasizes the role of communication and solidarity in shaping fan communities as agents of social harmony and cultural identity.

4. Results and Discussion

The conceptual exploration of group cohesiveness in the Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC) Bekasi Region reveals that the strength of a community's public image depends on how its members communicate, interact, and uphold shared values. While this study is not empirical in nature, the theoretical synthesis provides a nuanced understanding of the communicative processes that sustain CISC Bekasi as a cohesive and positively perceived fan organization.

In this section, three key themes emerge: (1) the role of communication in shaping group cohesion, (2) the dynamics of solidarity and collective identity, and (3) the impact of cohesiveness on building a positive community image. Each theme demonstrates that communication and cohesiveness are not separate forces but interdependent processes that reinforce one another.

Communication as the Core of Cohesion

At the foundation of any cohesive group lies effective communication. CISC Bekasi's cohesiveness stems from its members' ability to maintain open, respectful, and emotionally engaging interactions. In line with Mulyana's (2016) definition,

communication functions as the process of sharing meaning—a dynamic exchange that shapes members' sense of identity and belonging.

CISC Bekasi's internal communication operates on two levels: interpersonal and collective. On the interpersonal level, members build relationships through casual conversations, humor, and shared experiences during football matches or social gatherings. These everyday interactions generate familiarity and trust, which are essential for long-term cohesiveness. On the collective level, communication occurs through coordinated group discussions, planning meetings, and shared rituals such as nonton bareng (watching matches together) or anniversary events. These collective interactions help align members' goals and reinforce a shared vision of what it means to belong to CISC Bekasi.

In this process, communication goes beyond words. Nonverbal expressions—such as wearing Chelsea jerseys, displaying community banners, or using shared gestures and chants—carry symbolic power that reminds members of their unity. These actions are examples of what William I. Gorden (in Mulyana, 2016) calls the ritual function of communication, where repeated symbolic behavior reaffirms collective values.

Furthermore, communication plays a regulatory role. Through discussion and consensus-building, CISC Bekasi establishes norms for behavior and participation. When disagreements arise, communication becomes the mechanism for resolving conflict and restoring harmony. Such democratic dialogue strengthens group integrity by ensuring that every member feels heard and respected. As a result, communication within the group functions not only as a means of coordination but as an emotional and moral glue that binds the community together.

Cohesiveness as a Shared Emotional Space

Cohesiveness within CISC Bekasi is not the result of formal rules or strict hierarchies, but of emotional attachment and mutual respect. As Forsyth (in Nababan, 2022) explains, cohesiveness reflects the degree of attraction members feel toward one another and toward the group as a whole. In communities like CISC Bekasi, these attachments are built on shared experiences, collective pride, and consistent communication.

When members meet regularly—whether to watch a match, play futsal, or celebrate an anniversary—they are not just participating in events; they are reaffirming their membership in a symbolic family. This emotional dimension is what Collins and Raven (in Arifuddin, 2016) identify as the psychological force that keeps individuals committed to the group. The stronger this emotional connection, the more resilient the community becomes against internal conflict or external challenges.

In CISC Bekasi, cohesiveness manifests through several observable dynamics. First, there is a sense of equality—members from diverse backgrounds interact without rigid social barriers. Football serves as the equalizer that transcends class, profession, and age. Second, there is a shared language and humor, unique to the group, that reinforces intimacy and belonging. Third, members display mutual support, helping one another in personal matters, not just in football-related contexts. These patterns illustrate how social attraction and cooperation, as outlined by Forsyth, operate in practice.

Such cohesiveness is self-sustaining. The more individuals experience warmth, recognition, and shared pride within the group, the stronger their motivation to participate. This dynamic aligns with Williams' (in Sholeh, 2017) argument that members who enjoy being part of a group tend to invest more effort into maintaining it. Therefore, CISC Bekasi's cohesiveness is not a static condition but a continuous process of emotional renewal, nurtured through communication and shared meaning.

Collective Identity and Social Belonging

CISC Bekasi's cohesiveness also contributes to the formation of a strong collective identity. A collective identity emerges when members perceive themselves as part of a distinct social entity with common values and goals. In this sense, identity functions as both the outcome and the driver of cohesiveness.

Members of CISC Bekasi share a dual identity: they are Chelsea supporters and members of a local community in Bekasi. This dual identity creates an interesting cultural blend—global affiliation with a world-famous football club and local solidarity among

Indonesian fans. The group's ability to harmonize these layers of identity demonstrates the flexibility and inclusiveness of its social structure.

According to the brand community perspective of Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018), collective identity in such communities is sustained through three main pillars: shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility. In CISC Bekasi, shared consciousness emerges from the collective recognition of being part of "the blue family." Rituals and traditions include match gatherings, collective celebrations, and regular community outreach programs. Moral responsibility manifests in members' commitment to uphold the reputation of CISC as a positive and respectful supporter group.

These elements transform fandom from passive spectatorship into active social engagement. Members do not simply watch Chelsea play; they embody the spirit of teamwork, loyalty, and respect in their own local context. Through this embodiment, the community becomes a space for personal and social growth, where members learn cooperation, empathy, and leadership.

The collective identity formed through cohesiveness also creates a buffer against negative stereotypes often associated with football supporters. While some fan groups may be portrayed as unruly or aggressive, CISC Bekasi demonstrates that supporter communities can cultivate civility and solidarity instead. This transformation in self-identity directly influences how outsiders perceive the group, reinforcing the link between internal unity and external image.

Cohesiveness and Positive Community Image

A community's public image reflects how it is seen by the wider society. As Jefkins (in Maulyan et al., 2022) notes, image is a mental picture formed by others based on consistent behavior and communication. For CISC Bekasi, this image is built not through promotional campaigns but through everyday interactions and public activities that reflect unity and respect.

The relationship between cohesiveness and image is cyclical. High cohesiveness leads to consistent and positive collective behavior, which in turn shapes favorable public perception. Conversely, a positive public image strengthens members' pride and commitment, reinforcing cohesiveness. This reciprocal relationship helps explain why CISC Bekasi has maintained stability and reputation over the years. Public perception of CISC Bekasi is influenced by three main aspects of its cohesiveness:

Consistency in Communication and Behavior.

When members consistently communicate and act respectfully—both online and offline—the group projects reliability and maturity. This consistency aligns with Jefkins' (in Maulyan et al., 2022) view that reputation grows from predictable, positive conduct.

Community Engagement and Social Presence.

CISC Bekasi's involvement in charitable events, football tournaments, and collaborative activities with other communities enhances its visibility as a socially responsible organization. Such engagement demonstrates that the group's enthusiasm for football extends to broader social contribution.

Shared Representation of Values.

The members' commitment to embody values like sportsmanship, friendship, and loyalty reflects well on the community as a whole. These values form the moral backbone that sustains a positive image in the public eye.

By embodying these elements, CISC Bekasi functions as what Boush and Jones (in Mahiri, 2020) describe as a value-based community—one whose reputation depends on the authenticity and consistency of its actions. A good image, in this case, is not a matter of external branding but of internal integrity.

Communication, Cohesion, and Cultural Relevance

Another layer of discussion involves the cultural context in which CISC Bekasi operates. Indonesian society places a high value on togetherness (kebersamaan) and mutual assistance (gotong royong). These cultural values align naturally with the principles of cohesiveness and collective identity. The success of CISC Bekasi can thus be partly

attributed to its ability to express local cultural values through the global medium of football fandom.

This blending of global and local cultures represents what scholars often call glocalization—a process where global symbols (like Chelsea FC) are adapted to local cultural contexts. Within this framework, CISC Bekasi's cohesiveness reflects not only communication theory but also Indonesian social norms that prioritize harmony, respect, and cooperation. By integrating these values into their interactions, members strengthen the moral foundation of their community and ensure its positive public image.

Furthermore, the group's cohesion contributes to social learning. Younger members observe how senior members communicate, organize, and behave responsibly. These patterns of mentorship foster a sustainable community culture that perpetuates positive practices across generations. In this sense, cohesiveness is not merely a social phenomenon but also an educational process.

Conceptual Reflection

From a conceptual standpoint, the experience of CISC Bekasi supports the argument that communication and cohesiveness are mutually constitutive. Effective communication builds trust and shared understanding, which in turn reinforce cohesiveness. In return, cohesiveness motivates members to communicate more openly and supportively, creating a self-reinforcing loop.

This cyclical relationship mirrors Forsyth's model (in Nababan, 2022), where emotional and behavioral interdependence sustain group unity. It also aligns with the brand community model of Muniz and O'Guinn, in which rituals and moral responsibility continually reproduce social identity. Together, these frameworks explain how a fan community like CISC Bekasi can sustain itself over time and project a positive image without relying on formal organizational structures.

Ultimately, the discussion suggests that group cohesiveness is both an outcome and a strategy. It emerges naturally from shared enthusiasm but must be consciously maintained through communication, respect, and collective responsibility. The positive image that follows is not accidental—it is the visible expression of internal harmony.

5. Conclusions

The conceptual exploration of the Chelsea Indonesia Supporters Club (CISC) Bekasi Region highlights that group cohesiveness is both the heart and the strength of any community that seeks to build a positive public image. Cohesiveness does not appear spontaneously; it grows through communication, shared experiences, and a continuous process of meaning-making among members. In CISC Bekasi, the collective enthusiasm for Chelsea FC becomes a medium for building solidarity, friendship, and identity—turning football fandom into a productive social phenomenon.

This study has shown that communication plays a central role in nurturing cohesiveness. Communication within CISC Bekasi is not limited to the exchange of information but involves emotional connection, shared rituals, and moral understanding. Members communicate through conversations, gestures, humor, and mutual support—each interaction reinforcing their sense of belonging. As Mulyana (2016) explains, communication is an ongoing process of creating shared meaning. When practiced consistently, it becomes a unifying force that shapes both the group's internal harmony and its external reputation.

At the same time, cohesiveness functions as both a psychological and social bond. Drawing from Forsyth's (in Nababan, 2022) model, cohesiveness in CISC Bekasi can be seen across four dimensions: social attraction, group unity, cooperation, and belonging. These dimensions emerge through activities such as collective match viewing, sports competitions, and charity work, where members collaborate and celebrate their shared identity. Emotional closeness and trust prevent fragmentation, ensuring that the group remains stable and resilient over time.

The link between communication and cohesiveness forms the foundation of CISC Bekasi's success in maintaining a positive community image. The group's public reputation is not the result of external campaigns or media management but rather the natural

outcome of consistent, respectful, and value-driven interaction among its members. As Jefkins (in Maulyan et al., 2022) notes, a positive image is created when people observe trustworthy and coherent behavior over time. In the case of CISC Bekasi, the members' shared commitment to sportsmanship, inclusivity, and social participation has cultivated precisely such an image.

Beyond internal dynamics, the CISC Bekasi community also reflects broader cultural values that resonate with Indonesian society. The spirit of *kebersamaan* (togetherness) and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) is evident in how members support each other, make collective decisions, and represent their community publicly. This alignment between local values and group practices contributes to the authenticity of CISC Bekasi's image—it is not only cohesive but also culturally grounded.

The discussion also suggests that group cohesiveness operates as a communicative strategy. It is both an outcome of interaction and a deliberate effort to maintain unity and purpose. The community's cohesiveness becomes a living expression of its collective identity: members identify with one another as part of "the blue family," uphold traditions that strengthen emotional bonds, and take moral responsibility for the group's image. These behaviors align closely with the principles of the brand community framework proposed by Muniz and O'Guinn (in Ratnawati & Lestari, 2018), where consciousness of kind, shared rituals, and moral obligation sustain long-term unity.

The conceptual synthesis developed in this paper also contributes to theoretical reflection. It reinforces the idea that communication and cohesiveness are cyclical and interdependent. Effective communication strengthens cohesiveness; in turn, cohesive relationships enhance the quality and openness of communication. This dynamic cycle ensures the sustainability of the group and the continuity of its positive reputation.

Furthermore, this study illustrates how fan communities can evolve into constructive social spaces. Often dismissed as mere outlets for entertainment or emotional release, football supporter groups like CISC Bekasi demonstrate that fandom can foster civic participation, cultural learning, and moral development. Through their structured communication and cooperative spirit, members model values such as respect, tolerance, and responsibility— values that extend beyond the football field.

Conceptually, the experience of CISC Bekasi offers three key insights:

Cohesiveness as Cultural Capital: The unity among members serves as a form of intangible resource that sustains engagement and credibility.

Communication as a Sustaining Mechanism: Regular, open, and empathetic communication keeps the group dynamic and adaptive.

Positive Image as a Social Reflection: The community's public reputation mirrors its internal harmony and shared moral standards.

For scholars and practitioners, these insights suggest that community image cannot be constructed artificially. It must emerge organically from internal processes of dialogue, solidarity, and shared values. Thus, in communication studies, group cohesiveness deserves greater attention not only as a sociopsychological variable but also as a communicative practice that shapes identity and image simultaneously.

Finally, the case of CISC Bekasi demonstrates that in the era of digital connectivity, physical communities continue to play an essential role in sustaining social ties and moral cohesion. Even in an online world, face-to-face interaction, emotional presence, and shared experience remain irreplaceable foundations of community life. The cohesiveness of CISC Bekasi, built through these very practices, stands as an inspiring example of how passion for football can translate into meaningful social unity and positive representation.

In conclusion, group cohesiveness within CISC Bekasi is not only about staying together but about growing together—as individuals, as fans, and as a community. Through continuous communication, mutual respect, and collective responsibility, the members have built more than a supporter club; they have built a social space that embodies friendship, learning, and pride. This makes CISC Bekasi not just a group of Chelsea supporters but a model of how modern fan communities can contribute to the positive fabric of society.

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