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Interaction and Support from Haechan NCT Fans Through the Fanbase Instagram Account @Haechanoonaa

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ABSTRACT

The development of social media has changed the patterns of interaction and the way fans express their support for K-Pop idols. Instagram fanbase accounts have become an important communication space in building relationships between fans and idols. This study discusses the forms of interaction and communication strategies developed by the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa in interpreting fan support for Haechan NCT, with the aim of analyzing communication forms, support strategies, and the dynamics of fan identity formation. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method through the perspective of Herbert Blumer's symbolic interaction theory. Data collection techniques included online observation, in-depth interviews with fanbase administrators and account followers, and documentation of digital communication activities. The results of the study show that the @haechanoonaa account builds personal, interactive, and emotional communication through the use of visual symbols, informal language styles, and persuasive content. The interactions formed give rise to a sense of collective support, strengthen solidarity, and build a fan community identity. Thus, fanbase accounts serve as symbolic communication spaces that shape meaning through the exchange of symbols and build fan identity through engagement with idols on social media.

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INTRODUCTION

The current era is becoming more modern every day, in line with the rapid advancement of technology. The growth of social media and the internet has opened up opportunities for people to easily access information and communicate (Lestari & Erawati, 2019), as well as gain insight into the outside world without having to visit other countries directly. Developments in information technology, especially mass media, have had a huge impact on advances in communication (Rohima et al., 2024). Communication plays an important role in shaping fan identity. Social media has changed the way fans interact and express their support for idols. The meaning of such interactions arises from the social interactions that a person has with fellow fans (Muhid & Wahyudi, 2020). Fans channel their enthusiasm and connect with each other through various platforms such as Instagram. One of the most popular idols and trends today is K-pop, and fans communicate through various social media platforms.

This study focuses on how social meaning is formed through interactions between fans on social media, particularly on the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa. These interactions are not limited to the exchange of information but also involve the interpretation of symbols, language, and actions that are subjectively interpreted by fans. Through these interactions, emotional bonds and symbolic closeness between fans and their idols can form

and continue to develop in the digital space. This is in line with the findings of Roihanah & Andreas (2025), which show that fans of the K-Pop idol group NCT not only act as content consumers but are also actively involved in building interactions, expressing support, and negotiating the meaning of closeness through digital activities such as comments, reposts, and the use of fandom-specific symbols.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between social media and fan culture. Paramita and Jeanette (2018) found that interactions between fans and idols often involve parasocial relationships, where fans feel emotional closeness to their idols despite the lack of direct interaction. Similarly, El Farabi (2020) explains that K-Pop fans actively produce and share content in digital spaces, such as fan fiction, which demonstrates their creative participation and emotional involvement with idols. Research by Eva Dinar et al. (2022) also shows that K-Pop fan culture contributes to the development of creativity and social interaction among young fans.

In addition, Purba and Solekhah (2019) emphasize that solidarity among K-Pop fans in the digital era is strengthened through online interactions that build emotional support and collective enthusiasm within fandom communities. Research conducted by Rohima et al. (2024) also reveals that the expansion of the K-Pop industry has influenced communication styles and behavioral patterns among K-Pop fans, particularly in the way they express admiration and support through digital media.

More recent studies highlight the role of fanbase accounts in organizing fan activities. Harmaini et al. (2025) explain that well-managed fandom communication strategies can strengthen solidarity and mobilize collective support for idols. Mawardani et al. (2025) further note that digital communication strategies, including captions, visual symbols, and narrative storytelling, significantly influence audience participation within fandom communities. Meanwhile, Arland et al. (2025) found that social media platforms function as important spaces for maintaining relationships between idols and fans by facilitating continuous interaction and information exchange.

Although previous studies have explored fan culture and social media interactions within K-Pop fandoms, most research focuses on fandom communities in general or on large-scale digital platforms. Limited research specifically examines how individual fanbase accounts on Instagram function as communication spaces that shape symbolic meaning, fan interaction, and identity formation within specific fandom groups. In particular, the dynamics of interaction and support among followers of the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa, which focuses on supporting Haechan NCT, have not been widely studied.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the forms of interaction and communication strategies developed by the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa in interpreting fan support for Haechan NCT. This research focuses on understanding how symbolic communication is constructed through fan interactions, how support strategies are organized through the fanbase account, and how fan identity is formed through digital engagement within the fandom community. By examining these dynamics, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of fandom communication practices on social media and contribute to the study of digital fan culture in the context of K-Pop fandom communities.

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METHOD

Researchers used a descriptive qualitative approach to understand the meaning of communication behavior and social dynamics formed on Instagram @haechanoonaa. The data collection methods in this study included online observation of the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa, focusing on fan interactions and support through digital content, online interviews with the fanbase admin and four followers, and documentation in the form of screenshots of posts and comments as visual evidence. The data sources in this study consist of primary data obtained through observation and interviews, as well as secondary data from literature, journals, online articles, and supporting documentation related to the activities of the @haechanoonaa fanbase.

This study uses purposive sampling, which is a technique of deliberately selecting samples based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives. According to Sugiyono (2023), purposive sampling is a technique that involves selecting subjects based on specific criteria and characteristics predetermined by the researcher. In this study, individuals were selected who were active followers of the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa, had interacted with uploaded content (such as commenting, liking posts, following fanbase activities, or reposting content), were at least 20 years old (to ensure they were capable of providing mature responses regarding their experiences interacting on social media), and were willing to participate in interviews as required by the study.

To ensure data validity, this study used source triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing and verifying data obtained from various data collection sources to ensure consistency of information from different perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication on the Instagram fanbase account @haechanoonaa serves as a space for interaction among fans of Haechan NCT. It functions as a place where Haechan fans can connect with each other. The results of the study show that fan accounts like this are not only used to share news, but also serve as a gathering place where fans can connect, express their enthusiasm, and create a sense of community online.

The Meaning of Fan Interaction and Support

The creation of the @haechanoonaa fanbase account was based on the need for a social space for NCT Haechan fans to share their enthusiasm with each other. Based on the interview results, “At first, there were no other Haechan fans around me. Usually, when you're a fan, you want to chat with others who are also fans of Haechan, so I created a special Instagram account to share updates about Haechan and support his activities.” (Instagram Admin @haechanoonaa, 2025) This indicates that the account was initially created due to the lack of fellow fans in the surrounding environment, which led to a desire to have a space to share and discuss with other fans. The communication built in this account is characterized by the use of symbols, casual language, distinctive emojis, and familiar greetings that create a personal connection. This communication pattern was formed through daily interactions between the admin and followers, so that a sense of closeness and support emerged from the continuous exchange of symbols. Followers interpreted this communication style as a comfortable and warm space to express their support for Haechan NCT.

The interactions and support provided by fans through the @haechanoonaa fanbase account have a meaning that goes beyond mere digital activity. For fans, interactions such as commenting, liking posts, participating in voting campaigns, and sharing various content are understood as a form of emotional involvement and recognition of their identity as fans of Haechan NCT. The meaning of this support is formed through a process of mutual explanation of symbols, language, and actions that are repeated within the community.



Figure 1. Instagram account @haechanoonaa
Source: Instagram @haechanoonaa

Showing the Instagram profile @haechanoonaa, which serves as an individual fanbase account for Haechan NCT, this account can be understood as a fan communication medium that facilitates the dissemination of information, expression, and the formation of a collective identity among Haechan fans. Its large number of followers also shows that this account has a strategic position, especially in building and supporting follower participation through consistent content.

Next, the admin's interaction in sharing feed posts, stories, and responses in the comments section on the @haechanoona account regarding the news that Haechan NCT has become the brand ambassador for Korean makeup brand NAMING.



Figure 2. Feed posts, stories, and responses in the comments section
Source: Instagram @haechanoonaa

The image above shows the active role of the fanbase admin account in responding to the news of Haechan NCT as the brand ambassador for Korean makeup brand NAMING, which not only disseminates information but also frames it with emotional narratives and fandom language that resonates with followers. This triggers follower engagement, as seen in enthusiastic comments related to the product and expressions of collective pride. Based on interview results, “the haechanoonaa account has high engagement from Haechan's own fans. Likes, comments, and shares can help boost Haechan's content reach” (informant salamah, 2025). This reflects the function of the fanbase account as a communication mediator between the admin and Haechan's fans, while also strengthening fan participation in the realm of fandom consumption and identity.

The Strategy of the @haechanoonaa Account in Supporting Haechan NCT

Furthermore, the @haechanoonaa account actively encouraged followers to participate in voting as a strategy to support Haechan NCT's victory in his solo comeback album CRZY.

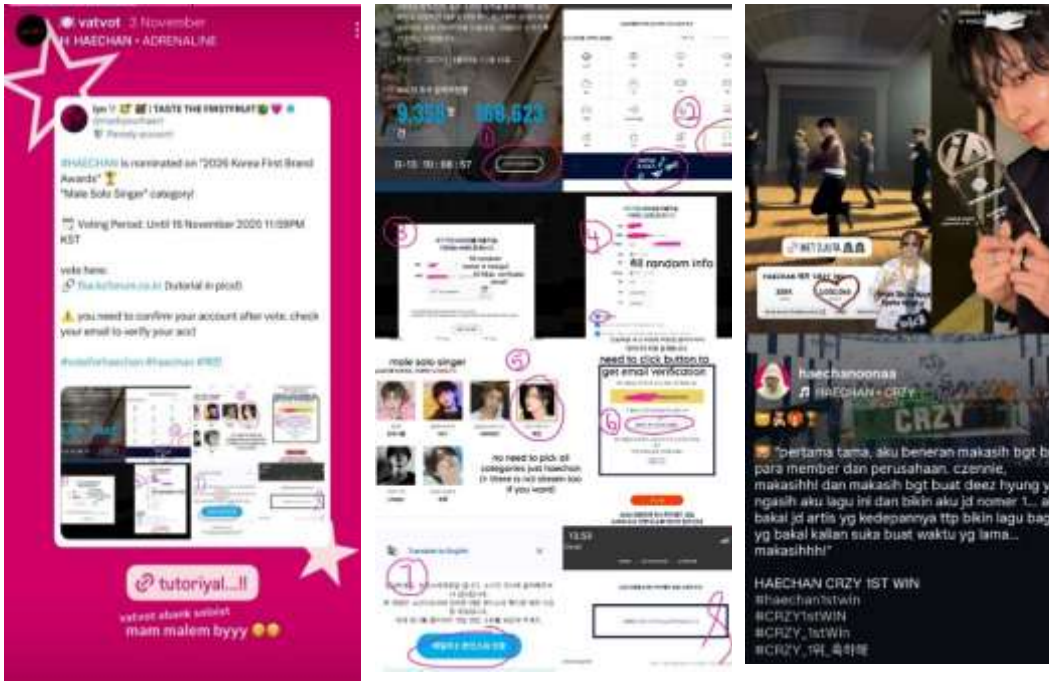


Figure 3. Haechan's voting tutorial for his first win album, CRZY

Source: Instagram @haechanoonaa

The call to vote in the image above was conveyed through a story post using persuasive language and easy-to-understand instructions, encouraging Instagram followers and Haechan fans to get involved directly. Based on the interview results, “one of the ways we support him as fans through a large fanbase is by sharing information to help his album climb the charts.” (Anjani Informan, 2025) Fanbase accounts also function as tools for mass mobilization, where fan participation is interpreted as a form of symbolic support that contributes to the idol's achievements. Another interview result stated, “The language style is casual and inviting, so we understand that support is not just about liking, but also actively voting, streaming, or spreading information.” (Salamah, Informan, 2025).

The Dynamics of Fanbase Communication in the Formation of NCT Haechan Fans' Identity

Furthermore, the @haechanoonaa account actively shares information with followers to participate in donation activities and help spread information about fundraising when disasters occur.

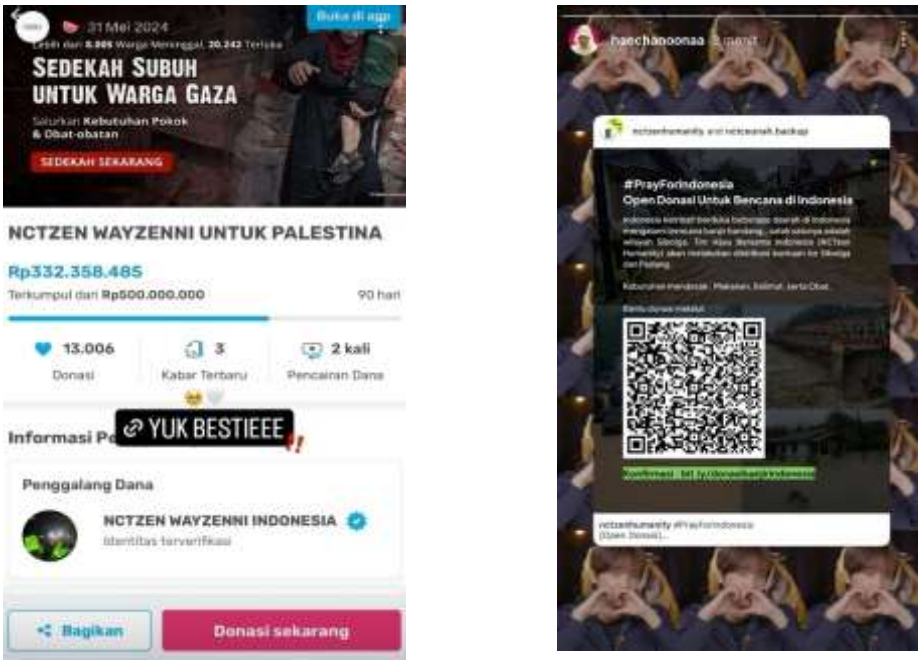


Figure 4. donation activities and fundraising information
Source: Instagram @haechanoonaa

The @haechanoonaa account uses Instagram as a space for social solidarity, inviting followers to participate in humanitarian donation activities for victims of natural disasters in Indonesia and global humanitarian issues such as Palestine. Based on interview results, "The account also plays a special role in highlighting current social issues" (Abelvan, 2025). Through story posts, fanbase administrators share clear donation information and encourage collective awareness. The @haechanoonaa account shows that fanbase accounts not only focus on supporting idols but also play a role in building social awareness and promoting humanitarian action among fans.

Furthermore, the dynamics of the @haechanoonaa fanbase can be seen as an evolving communication process that involves active participation between administrators and followers. Based on other interview results, "I feel like I have a place to follow Haechan's activities because this account is frequently updated" (Salamah Informan, 2025). This not only serves as a channel for distributing information about Haechan's activities and achievements but also as a space for social interaction where fans can express their emotions, affection, and support.

The dynamics of the fanbase are also evident in the account's ability to coordinate collective actions, such as voting, donations, and the dissemination of promotional information. Followers are not positioned as passive participants but contribute directly to various fandom agendas. Interactions in the comments section and responses from administrators strengthen the reciprocal relationship, where followers feel heard and involved.

The Instagram fanbase @haechanoonaa, as a digital community, plays a strategic role in shaping communication patterns and fan engagement on social media. It serves as an example of how fans utilize Instagram not only to disseminate information about idols but also to build interaction, solidarity, and collective participation. This discussion aims to

examine the dynamics within the fanbase, particularly how administrators and followers interact with each other to create an active and meaningful fan community.

The admin showed the latest information regarding Haechan's appointment as a brand ambassador, which was not only informative but also carried symbolic meaning for fans. The post was packaged using visual elements of the idol, emphasizing Haechan's identity, and language that described the collective pride of the fandom. This allowed followers to interpret this achievement as a form of recognition of the value and popularity of the idol they support.

The responses in the comments section showed how fans actively interpreted the information through emotional expressions, praise, and affirmation of Haechan. This interaction demonstrates that the meaning of the brand ambassador appointment was not formed individually, but rather constructed through the exchange of symbols and social responses among fandom members, as explained in Blumer's symbolic interaction perspective (Rahma, 2024). The admin triggers this process by presenting information that aligns with the values and identity of the fans.

Communication on the @haechanoonaa account serves as a mediator of meaning between the idol, the brand, and the fans. These findings are consistent with previous research (El Farabi, 2020), which states that the internet creates a space for fans to interact and form emotional bonds. The admin explained that when the Instagram fanbase @haechanoonaa first appeared, the surrounding environment was not yet dominated by Haechan fans. This condition encouraged the need for a platform that could freely channel enthusiasm while expanding the network of friendships with fellow fans who had similar interests. This phenomenon shows that fanbase accounts serve as the main hub for community interaction that transcends physical boundaries.

This result is seen in symbolic interactions, where people act based on the meaning they assign to an object. For the followers, @haechanoonaa is not just an information account, but a symbol of closeness. One of the followers stated that the @haechanoonaa account is a comfortable space to follow various content related to Haechan because they can feel an emotional closeness. The followers' participation in liking, commenting, and reposting posts is a form of collective support that reflects a shared understanding of their identity as fans of Haechan NCT.

The process of creating meaning on this account occurs through a personal and unique communication style. The admin deliberately uses a casual and playful delivery style so as not to appear formal. This interaction reflects Blumer's assumption that meaning is created through a social process, forming a “community language” that only they understand. This is one example of how quickly the @haechanoonaa fanbase account updates information. Every time Haechan shares content about his activities, as well as his involvement in user-generated content, the admin immediately reposts the content to Instagram stories and feeds, allowing fans to access real-time information. These updates are not only informative but also strengthen the emotional connection between Haechan and his fans through digital interaction. As a fanbase with positive responses in the comment section, these updates demonstrate their ability to create connectivity through communication, fostering a strong emotional bond between the admin and followers. Thus, the @haechanoonaa account serves

as a medium that strengthens the bond and meaning of support between Haechan and his fan community.

The thinking process becomes a bridge before fans decide to respond to fanbase posts. Before pressing the like button or commenting, fans first interpret the message conveyed by the admin. As explained in the study (Virginia, 2022), the thinking process is an active interpretive activity of social symbols. The interview results show that when information is incomplete, active followers provide feedback. When the admin does not know certain information about Haechan, followers often respond through replies or direct messages. This shows that there is a collective thinking process in maintaining the accuracy of information within the community, where followers not only act as recipients of information but also as contributors who collectively build and complete the information.

The @haechanoonaa account not only shares information about Haechan's activities but also implements specific strategies to make the support provided more structured and meaningful. These actions symbolize a commitment to the idol's success. Online interactions like these foster solidarity and strong emotional support among community members, as the visual narrative and spontaneous humor are appealing (Purba & Solekhah, 2019). The main thing that distinguishes @haechanoonaa from other fanbase accounts is that digital communication strategies, such as the use of captions, greatly influence the level of participation (Mawardani et al., 2025). The @haechanoonaa account proves that interactions in the digital space can create a real social reality for fans.

As emphasized by Harmaini et al. (2025), well-managed communication by the fanbase account admin can build a sense of solidarity that transcends face-to-face interactions, strengthening the position of the Instagram @haechanoonaa account as an important pillar in supporting Haechan. In addition, the use of Instagram features is part of the digital communication strategy of the @haechanoonaa account. The admin uses Stories and Highlights to make it easier for fans to follow information and participate. This strategy is reinforced by the creation of clear streaming and voting guidelines, enabling even unfamiliar fans to easily follow the steps. Through this approach, the fanbase not only disseminates information but also provides technical guidance to make fan support more effective.

The existence of the @haechanoonaa account also serves as a means to overcome the limitations of offline support. Social media is used as an alternative space to build communities. This shows that digital communication within fandom plays a role in forming social networks and symbolic solidarity among fans (Arland et al., 2025). Followers also perceive the account as a comfortable and safe space to follow Haechan's developments, creating a sense of emotional closeness even though interactions are conducted online.

Interaction between administrators and followers is two-way, with users commenting on and responding to posts. This practice reflects the openness of the media, where fanbase accounts provide a space for fans to freely express their opinions, emotions, and support (Wahyudin & Rokhaminawanti, 2022). Openness is also evident in the sharing of donation activities by fanbase accounts, which demonstrates transparency and encourages community participation. Through this openness, the dynamics of the community have evolved from mere symbolic support in the digital space to more tangible collective participation, thereby strengthening trust, solidarity, and a sense of belonging among fans. Social media has

become a space for collective action with a real social impact. Individual openness to various perspectives makes them more accepting of differences, but the identity that is formed is dynamic and can change with environmental influences (Putri et al., 2023).

Symbols are socially agreed-upon objects that represent deeper meanings through human actions (Muhid & Wahyudi, 2020). On the @haechanoonaa account, these symbols are manifested through visual objects, language styles, and images constructed to maintain interaction and fan support. The speed and accuracy of information become symbols of loyalty and commitment from the admin, strengthening the bond with followers. This aligns with Blumer's principle in Aldeo & Agung (2025) that individuals act based on the meaning they assign to others' actions, in this case, the admin's promptness in providing real-time updates.

The visual aspect of content editing, which focuses on Haechan, allows fans to internalize their support in a practical way. According to research by Pamungkas et al. (2023), visuals like this serve as symbols that reflect group identity and loyalty without requiring much personal effort from followers. Informal language styles, such as the term "byy" or the "jamet" style, become key symbols in building solidarity. The consistency of this warm and authentic image, including highlighting Haechan's 'tengil' or "gemini" character, becomes the foundation for fans to interpret support and strengthen their sense of belonging in the fandom (Putri & Sukandari, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The Instagram fanbase @haechanoonaa has proven to be an active and meaningful digital community in building communication, solidarity, and collective participation among NCT Haechan fans. The interactions between administrators and followers demonstrate that the fanbase not only serves as a source of information but also as a space for the formation of meaning, collective identity, and ongoing symbolic support. Through the consistent use of visual symbols, a distinctive language style, rapid information updates, and support strategies such as voting and streaming, this account is able to coordinate fan engagement in a structured and effective manner. These activities foster strong emotional bonds and cultivate a sense of belonging within the fandom community. Instagram @haechanoonaa can be understood as an example of how symbolic interactions on social media can create a tangible social reality, strengthen fan solidarity, and affirm the role of fanbases as key actors in the dynamics of K-pop fandom in the digital space.

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