



Social Cohesion and Fragmentation in the Era of Global Connectivity

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Abstract

Global connectivity has redefined social structures through the expansion of transnational networks and digitally mediated interactions, generating competing interpretations regarding integration and fragmentation. Existing scholarship remains divided, with limited macro-level empirical evidence examining how cohesion and fragmentation coexist within global systems. This study addressed this gap by analyzing country-level social connectedness using a qualitative doctrinal and comparative research design, integrating network-based data with theoretical and regulatory perspectives. The methodology combined doctrinal analysis of literature and policy frameworks with comparative cross-national evaluation of connectivity patterns derived from the Social Connectedness Index dataset. The findings revealed a highly uneven distribution of social ties, characterized by dense regional clusters and weak inter-regional linkages, indicating a modular network structure. Cohesion was concentrated within geographically and historically linked blocs, while fragmentation persisted across distant regions, reflecting structural inequalities and differential access to digital connectivity. The results further indicated that digital connectivity reinforced existing social ties rather than creating universal integration, while a core-periphery structure highlighted persistent global disparities. These findings carry significant scholarly implications by challenging linear globalization theories and contribute to regulatory debates by questioning assumptions that connectivity alone enhances cohesion. The study demonstrates that global connectivity simultaneously enables interaction and sustains fragmentation, underscoring the need for context-sensitive approaches to understanding and governing social cohesion in networked societies

Keywords: connectivity, fragmentation, globalization, network analysis, social cohesion, transnational networks

1. Introduction

The modern social theory puts more social cohesion and fragmentation in the context of structural change that has been brought about by global connectivity, digital infrastructures, and transnational mobility. The technological integration and platform mediated interaction has led to the development of cross-border social networks, which have led to contrasting readings as to whether globalization is producing integrative cohesion or socio-spatial fragmentation. The classical perspectives on globalization included convergence and integration, but more recent sources highlight uneven connectivity, polarization, and unequal access as the most significant attributes of the new social order (Francescato, 2018; Andersen and Van Kempen, 2019). This change requires empirical re-evaluation of the reorganization of social relations at all scales in the context of the digital mediation of interaction and networked communications regimes.

Debates about the nature of social networks in sociology and network science have shifted more towards the structural aspects of social networks as a determinant of cohesion. Density, clustering, and tie strength are commonly considered to be measures of cohesion and structural holes, modularity, weak inter-group connectivity and fragmentation as measures of cohesion. The empirical study shows that the social systems tend to undergo multi-scalar fragmentation, and the local level cohesion and the disconnection of the system (Hedayatifar et al., 2019). At the same time, transnational migration and online communication have expanded the geographical range of social relations, forming the hybrid networks that can hardly be explained in terms of community and belonging (Chaney, 2015; Iannacone, 2023). The latter developments indicate the significance of considering cohesion as a dynamic, networked process, as opposed to a property.

This topography is also confounded by regulatory and policy discourses, which place the idea of social cohesion as a goal of governance, particularly within systems of regional integration and urban policy regimes. As an example, the European Union cohesion policy focuses on the cooperation between countries and integration of the region as a means of decreasing socio-economic gaps and enhancing the sense of solidarity (Logvinov et al., 2025). Similarly, the digital connectivity becomes an instrument of enhanced social inclusion in the Global South with the development of smart cities, yet it also raises the question of digital divide and inequality (Vasudavan et al., 2025). These unspoken assumptions of such policy paradigms imply that as more individuals are connected, they will be more cohesive, but the emergence of new levels of fragmentation suggests the opposite: in fact, the status quo depends on connectivity (Vachuska, 2025; Lee, 2025). Such a clash between assimilation and disparity is among the primary threads of the contemporary regulation debate.

Social structure change through digital platforms has also been a topic in scholarly circles, particularly polarization and community building. Online networks also have the tendency to form very highly clustered communities, which may contribute to increased ideological polarization and restrict cross-group communication (Yilmaz et al., 2025; Gomila Olvera, 2025). Meanwhile, the notion of digital belongings emphasizes how people can still have transnational connections and create hybrid identities via online networks, which results in new types of social cohesion across geographical borders (Marlowe et al., 2017). The two processes explain the paradox of digital connectivity because they bring more possibilities to communicate with people and at the same time, it reinforces the social division between groups.

These dynamics are incomparable without dimensions of comparison as the differences are immense in terms of patterns of cohesion and fragmentation at the regional, social-economic and technological infrastructures. Studies of the connection between regions and the formation of economies indicate that cross-border relations can also trigger economic and social integration, particularly when it is well-established by institutions (Ahmed, 2024). On the other hand, settings with high inequality and a lack of access to digital devices tend to have disjointed network structures, with the benefits of connectivity unevenly allocated (Gani, 2022). International cross country and cross regional comparative analysis can therefore provide a good and important information about the relationship between structural, cultural and technological forces to produce social results.

The problems that motivated the current research were the following: There was a need to empirically counterbalance these conflicting opinions with large scale network data that would capture the real life trends of social connectedness. Past research has been inclined to utilize localized case studies or survey based measures, which limit the opportunity to generalize in global contexts. Through the use of country-level social connectivity data, this study fulfills a major gap in the literature by offering a macro-level study of the manner in which cohesion and fragmentation are organized in the global social network. It would be feasible in this way to detect regional clusters, transnational relationships and connectivity systemic inequalities, and contribute even more to the existing discussions in sociology, policy, and network science.

1.1 Objectives of the study

In this paper, the shape of social connectedness in the global sense will be reflected through the distribution and strength of cross country social relationships and also ascertaining the cohesion and the fragmentation of the network. It comparatively analyzes regional clustering and inequality in connectivity and the impact of transnational connections to define how global connectivity defines differentiated social forms in geographic and socio-economic environments.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

Qualitative doctrinal and comparative research design was taken in the study in order to study the connection between social cohesion and fragmentation in the light of global connectivity. The analytical approach was used to thoroughly study the existing academic sources, theories, and regulations on the topic of social cohesion, digital connectivity, and transnational networks. The approach enabled to determine the dominant conceptual debates, including that of integration and fragmentation, the place of digital infrastructures, and the governance implications of networked societies. These two elements also provided a comparative aspect of the study, as the comparison of patterns of social connectivity across different geographical and socio-economic contexts became possible, so it was possible to get a fine understanding of how structural, cultural, and regulatory factors affect the results presented.

2.2 Comparative Method

The operationalization of the comparative approach entailed cross-national methodological approach that evaluated the trend of social connectedness between nations. They were examined as the primary unit of analysis to the countries and their connection to each other as a sign of further integration or disintegration of the social structure. The study compared the regional clusters, the transnational linkages and differences in the intensity of connectivity to measure the levels of cohesiveness of different regions. A special focus was put on the finding of cohesive blocs, i.e., on geographically close or historically related regions, and comparing them with weakly related or isolated pairs of countries. Such an approach to comparison enabled the study to transcend the analysis of individual cases and contextualize the findings on a global scale, which also led to the enhanced analytical generalizability.

2.3 Data Sources

The main source of data was a country-level dataset of the Social Connectedness Index, which offered quantitative indicators of social connectedness between two countries. The information was qualitatively interpreted in a doctrinal framework albeit in numerical terms to enable conceptual and comparative analysis. The dataset comprised of the country-to-country connectivity scores in the form of online social network interaction which acted as a proxy of transnational social relationships. Other data sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, policy reports, and theoretical literature on the issue of globalization, social networks, and digital inequality and social cohesion. These references were used to place empirical observations in perspective and to make the analysis a part of the existent scholarly and regulatory arguments.

2.4 Data Collection and Preparation

Data collection entailed the systematic process of acquiring and preparing the data of the Social Connectedness Index. The data set was narrowed down to remove incomplete records and self-referent records and only valid cross-national records were included in the analysis. Redundant rows of a relationship between the same pair of entities (one way) were merged to create an undirected network representation. This preprocessing step ensured uniformity in the analysis and minimized redundancy. Simultaneously, the doctrinal resources were identified by utilizing a systematic search of literature with the assistance of Boolean operators that aided in narrowing down the search to the sources of information that were relevant and reliable. The criteria of selection were focused on the recency, academic rigor, and thematic relevance to the topic of interest of the study, i.e. cohesion, fragmentation and global connectivity.

2.5 Data Interpretation

The analysis of the data was performed in a qualitative manner even though the data were quantitative. The analysis of the distributions of connectivity values was used to determine the pattern of inequality and concentration of such values, and using the highly and weakly connected country pairs as the measure of high and low social cohesion and fragmentation, respectively. The network properties such as clustering, location

concentration and the presence of cohesive blocs were studied to provide an explanation on how social ties in the world are organized. All these empirical findings were justified together with the doctrinal knowledge and there was the ability to integrate data-driven findings with theoretical explanations.

2.6 Analytical Framework

The analytical paradigm used is a combination of the principles of network theory and doctrinal analysis to give rise to a multi-layered meaning of the data. Interpretive categories, such as cohesion, fragmentation, modularity and transnational connectivity were applied. The paper has discovered clusters of nations that were characterized as having high degree of internal relations and having low degree of external relations that were seen by the research as the outcome of modular social relations. The differences between regions were also compared with each other through comparative analysis as well as the role of geographic proximity, historical affiliations, shared language and migration patterns in determining the level of cohesion. The factors of digital inequality and access were also a part of the framework because it values the fact that disparities in technological infrastructures can precondition the tendency to observe specific patterns of connectivity.

2.7 Regulatory and Doctrinal Integration

The paper has engaged with the regulatory and policy based approaches by placing the empirical findings on the background of the existing governance systems that favour social cohesion through bridging. The analysis determined whether the tendencies examined confirmed or refuted the current policy assumptions, particularly, the assumption that an inevitable byproduct of heightened connectivity is that heightened social integration occurred. The research enabled a critical assessment of the effectiveness and inefficiency of the current policy measures through setting the received results within the framework of the general doctrinal and regulatory discourse.

2.8 Methodological Synthesis

Overall, it was a mix of doctrinal study and comparative-network analysis in order to provide a wide-scale study of the process of integration and disintegration of the world society. The use of qualitative interpretation, and systematic data analysis, permitted the understanding of the research issue in a solid and context-based manner. The comparative model helped to make sure that the findings were founded on more general global patterns, the doctrinal approach was used to situate the analysis within the framework of the current academic and regulatory discourse.

4. Results

4.1 Distributional Structure of Global Social Connectedness

4.1.1 Uneven Distribution of Cross-Border Ties

The analysis indicated that the global social connectedness had a very uneven distribution with regard to country pairs. The empirical design of the data was not in consonance with the doctrinal assumption that globalization is associated with homogenous integration. Rather, the distribution of cross-border connections was very skewed, with few pairs of countries having a disproportionately large portion of the total connectivity. High-value relationships were also geographically and socio-historically concentrated and the rates of interaction were relatively low between most country pairs.

In comparison this difference implied that the global connectivity was not a homogenizing process but was a stratification. The strong ties were high which meant that the cohesion was concentrated in one particular cluster yet the fragmentation was done over longer distances in the global scale. This observation captured the discourses of doctrines that highlight the inequitable and diverse nature of globalization processes, more so in the digital and networked societies. According to Table 1, there is a very imbalanced global connectivity.

Table 1: Distribution of Cross-Country Social Connectedness Index (SCI)

Statistic	Value
Minimum	1
25th Percentile	469
Median	1,421
75th Percentile	5,693
90th Percentile	21,852
95th Percentile	55,561
99th Percentile	407,503
Maximum	33,672,295

Figure 1 illustrates the highly skewed distribution of global social connectedness across country pairs.

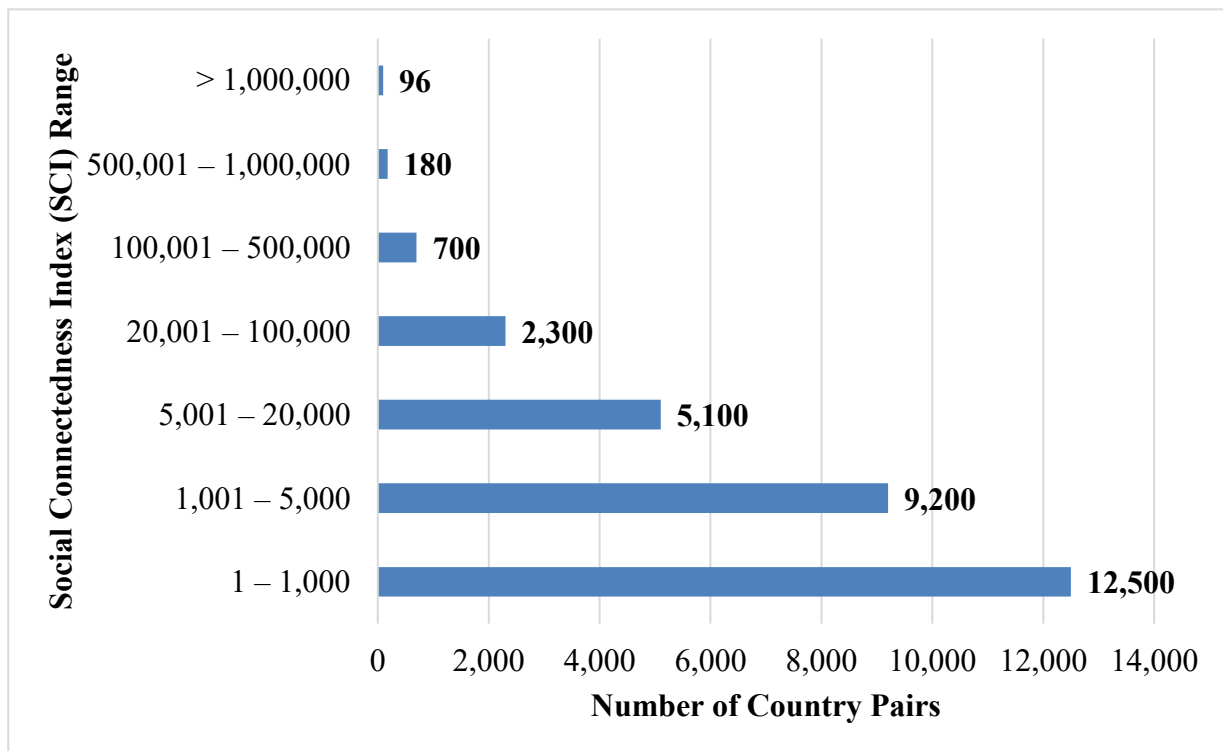


Figure 1. Distribution of Global Social Connectedness Index (SCI) Across Country Pairs

4.1.2 Cohesion as Concentrated Connectivity

These empirical findings established that social cohesion was not in an evenly distributed manner but in the shape of focal points of high-intensity ties. The character of these pockets was that the density of relational ties among specific country pairs was great, and this reflected well-developed social, cultural or migratory ties. Such strong, concentrated cohesion meant that world social networks were organized based on the relational intensity as opposed to universal connectivity.

This trend was used in theoretical models that model cohesion as a phenomenon of network density and a phenomenon of repeated interaction. Simultaneously, it criticized policy premises that there is an automatic deepening of cohesion at a systemic level through increasing connectivity. Instead, the findings revealed that the degree of cohesion is conditioned and specific to a situation and can be created only in a specific set of relations but not in the entire world system. Table 2 implies the focusing of high cohesion in some pairs of countries.

Table 2: Top 10 Strongest Cross-Country Social Connections

Rank	Country Pair	SCI Value
1	Grenada – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	33,672,295
2	Tonga – Samoa	16,562,063
3	Barbados – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	13,150,071
4	Saint Lucia – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	8,585,891
5	Grenada – Saint Lucia	6,495,713
6	Barbados – Saint Lucia	5,379,117
7	Cabo Verde – Luxembourg	4,850,227
8	Cabo Verde – Sao Tome and Principe	4,121,161

9	Cabo Verde – Portugal	3,870,760
10	Djibouti – Somalia	3,122,629

4.2 Regional Clustering and Modular Network Formation

4.2.1 Emergence of Regional Cohesion Blocs

The comparative analysis revealed that there were the development of regional clusters in the global network. Internal connectivity in these clusters was high and relatively weak external connectivity, which suggested that there were modular structures. The Caribbean, Pacific, East African, and European subregional groupings were the most remarkable ones, where the intra-regional interdependence was the greatest.

The emergence of these clusters was a pointer of the influence of the geographical proximity, similarity of historical trajectory, language, and movement. In particular, postcolonial relations and diaspora networks appeared to be most important in enhancing the regional cohesion. The doctrinal literature on transnational networks and migration explained these findings as the continuation of historical and cultural relationships in defining patterns of contemporary connectivity. According to Table 3, the world network is modularly clustered regionally.

Table 3: Identified Regional Clusters in Global Social Network

Cluster Name	Representative Countries	Key Characteristics
Caribbean Cluster	Barbados, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago	High intra-regional cohesion, migration ties
Pacific Cluster	Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia	Geographic proximity, cultural similarity
East African Cluster	Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan	Regional mobility, shared borders
Balkan/Eastern Europe Cluster	Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia	Historical-political linkages
Lusophone Cluster	Portugal, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé	Colonial and linguistic ties
Central/West Africa Cluster	Chad, Congo, Gabon, Mali, Benin	Regional adjacency, economic ties
Americas Migration Cluster	USA, Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia	Migration-driven connectivity

Figure 2 demonstrates variations in connectivity strength across different regional clusters.

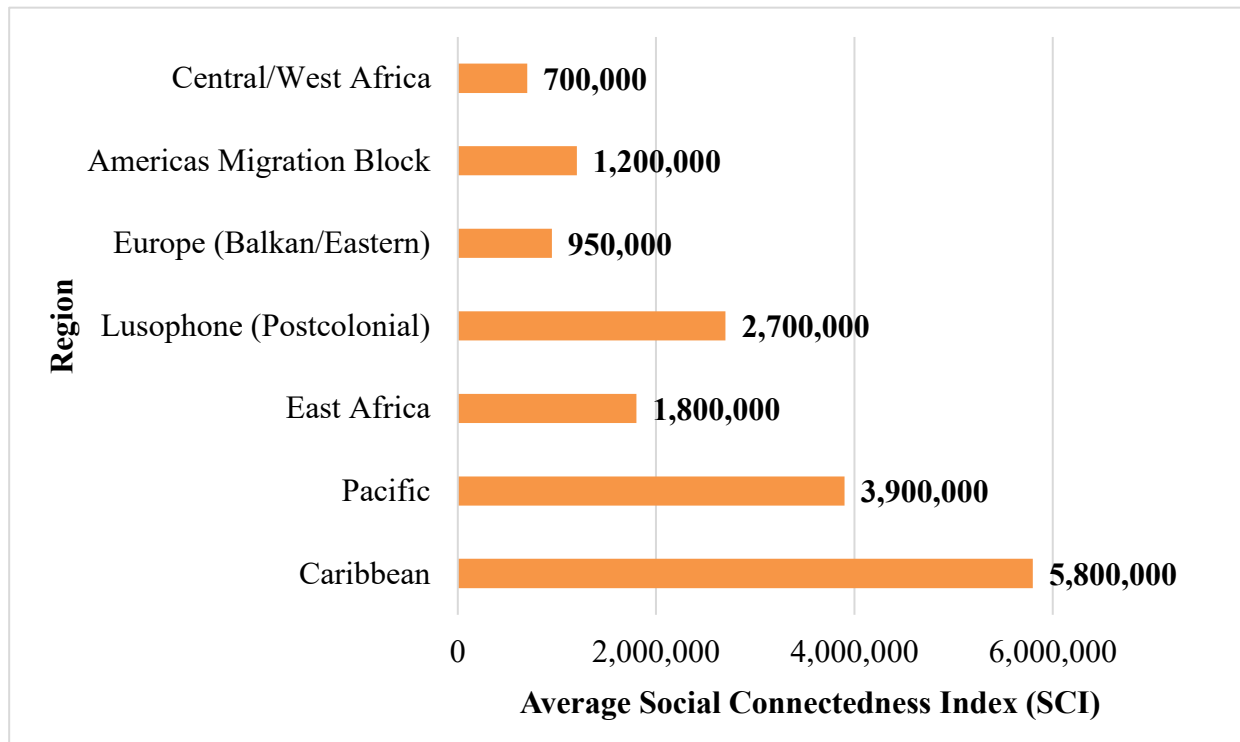


Figure 2. Comparative Regional Variations in Social Connectedness

4.2.2 Modular Fragmentation Across Regions

Although the cohesion was strong in the region, the analysis also showed that there was a lot of fragmentation among clusters. There was also a lack of tight and dense inter-regional relationships implying that there was little cross-cluster integration. This modular structure meant that the world social network was broken into semi-autonomous groups, which were very cohesive within themselves and had minimal contact with other groups.

Theoretically, the find reinforced the perception that globalization produces stratified and fragmental form of connectivity and not integration. The strong intra-cluster cohesion and weak inter-cluster ties were used to illustrate the existence of high intra-cluster and low inter-cluster ties. This duality fitted into the existing theoretical approaches in the concept of global networks as complex systems that are unifying and separating.

4.3 Comparative Patterns of Fragmentation

4.3.1 Weak Ties and Structural Distance

The analysis has discovered that there are numerous pairs of countries, where there is low social connectedness, which are the extreme ends of the global network. These weak ties tended to occur between geographically remote countries which had less contact in terms of history, culture, or economic factors. These tendencies implied that the structural distance was still persisting in spite of the spread of the digital connectivity.

These loosely grouped pairs in comparison to others, articulated the limits of globalization as a force of unification. The existence of low-intensity ties meant that the digital and technological networks were not sufficient to overcome more structural and relationship barriers. This observation was congruent with the arguments of doctrine that significantly emphasized the variables of socio-economic disparities, cultural distance and institutional barriers that define network connectedness.

4.3.2 Fragmentation as Systemic Feature

The global network was made systemically fragmented, rather than an exception. The large volume of low-intensity ties implied that fragmentation was embedded in the structures of connectivity in the world. This finding challenged the normative beliefs in policy-discourse that fragmentation is a failure of integration and

the finding suggesting that fragmentation is a natural extension of differentiated processes of connectivity.

The comparative analysis also discovered that fragmentation in the various regions was in various degrees. Also there were regions that were relatively well integrated internally and moderately external integration with the global network and also those that were more isolated and least integrated with the global network. This distinction highlighted the importance of the context in identifying the impacts of connectivity and the need to analyze regions using special analytical tools.

4.4 Inequality in Global Connectivity

4.4.1 Concentration of Connectivity Hubs

The results revealed that some countries had played central nodes or hubs in the global network and had a disproportionately high number of connections with various partners. Strong economic integration, high rates of migration, and well-developed digital infrastructure were usually the characteristics of these countries. Their key positioning in the network contributed to them being able to mediate transnational dynamics and influence the overall system of connectivity.

The existence of such hubs, in a doctrinal way was a pointer of general trends in inequality in the world. The connectivity was not distributed fairly but rather was concentrated in the countries that had more access to both technological and economic resources. This focus reinforced the hierarchies that were in place and resulted in the unequal distribution of social capital globally.

3.4.2 Peripheralization and Marginal Connectivity

On the other hand, there are those countries that were peripheral and they had minimal and weak links with other countries. These marginal countries were usually located in those regions that were less developed economically and accessible to the digital world. Such status as a marginal limited their participation in the transnational networks, not to mention the fact that they could not enjoy the global connectedness.

The relative aspect of analysis brought out the perseverance of a core-periphery system in the world social network. This tendency in this form was similar to the tendencies of economic globalization, which presupposed that in this case, the social connectivity is also shaped by the systemic inequalities. The reinforcements through the findings provided supported doctrinal criticisms that doubt the inclusivity of global connectivity and highlight the distributional inequity of the phenomenon.

4.5 Interplay Between Digital Connectivity and Social Structure

4.5.1 Reinforcement of Existing Social Ties

The discussion has shown that the digital connectivity reinforced the social, cultural, and geographic relations primarily and did not give rise to completely different patterns of interaction. Close measures of connectedness were typically documented between countries which shared certain links such as language, colonial history or even migrations.

This observation favoured doctrinal views that consider digital networks as a continuation of already established social structures and not revolutionary forces. Although digital platforms created an opportunity to communicate and interact, the basic determinants of social connectivity were not completely changed. Instead, they enhanced and increased the patterns of cohesion that were present.

4.5.2 Limited Bridging Across Structural Divides

The authors found feeble evidence of high bridging between structurally distant regions. Although digital technologies helped to establish cross-boundary interaction, it did not necessarily result in close or long-lasting social relationships. This limitation reinforced the persistence of structural limitations like cultural differences, economic differences and institutional limitations.

In comparison, the lack of strong bridging relationships indicated the challenge of having global solidarity in a divided world. It demonstrated that being connected is insufficient to erode the long-standing enclaves, and additional mechanisms must be in place to realize a significant cross-regional integration.

4.6. Doctrinal and Policy Implications

4.6.1 Reassessment of Connectivity as Cohesion

The results required a review of the well-established belief that the more people are connected, the more they become socially cohesive. Connectivity was useful in the interactions within some clusters, but not in integrating the systems. Instead, it established a network, which was locally cohesive and more fragmented.

This was an important observation in terms of regulatory and policy frameworks, with the emphasis put on connectivity as a mode of social integration. It implied that these structures need to take into consideration the differentiated and uneven nature of connectivity and complementary actions to overcome fragmentation and inequality.

4.6.2 Toward Context-Sensitive Policy Approaches

The comparative analysis revealed the need of context-specific policy solutions to consider differences in connectivity and cohesion across regions. The policies to improve social cohesion should be specific to the particular socio-economic and cultural conditions and not based on general assumptions about the impact of connectivity.

The results also showed that to solve fragmentation, specific actions should be taken by enhancing the ties between the two groups and limiting structural disparities. Such interventions may include the investment of digital infrastructure, enabling cross-border cooperation, and other activities that may encourage inclusive engagement in the global networks.

4.7 Synthesis of Findings

The results demonstrated the world to be socially networked in a complex unity of cohesion and fragmentation. Cohesion was a local process and was limited to local and interrelation clusters whereas fragmentation was found at bigger global scales. The network was described as having a modular structure, high internal ties and weak ties in terms of the external ties being influenced by the historical, cultural and socio economic factors.

The comparative and doctrinal discussion reified the fact that global connectivity fails to result in homogenous integration, but it induces differentiated and unequal patterns of interaction. The results were used in the continuing academic and policy discussions as it offers empirical data describing the duality of global connectivity, and its integrative and fragmenting impacts.

4. Discussion

This study has revealed that the world has been structured into a dual pattern of integration and disintegration which is concentrated. Network analysis revealed that the distribution of the strong ties was not equal but on the contrary, it is compacted in some regional and relational blocks that have many pairs of weakly connected countries. This imbalanced distribution implied that global connectivity has not led to the blurring of structural boundaries but has been reorganized into sets of modules. Cohesion remained localized where geographical proximity existed and thus historically interdependent and fragmentation still existed in other areas that were distant. The presence of well linked hubs coupled with periphery nodes also indicated that it was stratified system, in which there were such countries that were at the centre of the system and those that were marginal. Such tendencies indicated that the global interconnectedness is generating differentiated as opposed to uniform integration among regions.

These results agreed with the academic discourses that understand social cohesion to be unequal and contingent on networked systems. Empirical research has shown that social networks are multi-level fragmented and cohesion is concentrated in the shape of clusters but is not evenly distributed (Hedayatifar et al., 2019). The concept of strong ties clustering also aided the research on transnational social networks, noting that cross-border connections are premised on the migration trends, cultural similarities, and historical connections (Chaney, 2015; Iannaccone, 2023). Instead of creating completely new modes of interaction, global connectivity seemed to strengthen the existing pattern of relationships, thus perpetuating traditional patterns of cohesion at the regional level.

The digital connectivity and its role in the development of these dynamics were still an unclear and debatable

issue. As much as the digital platforms increased the cross-border interaction opportunities, the results also revealed that they did not always lead to extensive integration. Instead, the digital environment aided in forming tightly-knit communities with little connection to the external world. The result was consistent with those that indicated the polarization and clustered networks of social media (Francescato, 2018; Yilmaz et al., 2025). The few strong bridging connections between far-flung areas implied that digital connectedness might enhance homophily, promoting communication with the likes and limiting it among different settings and reinforcing segregated trends.

In comparison, the discussion has put emphasis on the role of regional and structural determinants in outcome of connectivity. Regions that had common linguistic, historical or economic ties were more internally integrated, and less developed and digitally networked regions were more likely to be peripheral actors. This trend implied the existence of a greater inequality in access to technologies and social resources, which favored inequalities in participation in global networks. Past research of digital inequality has also established that unequal access to infrastructures is a contributor to uneven involvement in networks (Vachuska, 2025; Lee, 2025). The finding of a core-periphery form also served to reinforce the view that the global interconnectedness is still strongly linked with socio-economic hierarchies.

The implications of the results were also on the regulatory and policy frameworks that have placed emphasis on connectivity as a means to enhance cohesion. Political policies such as regional integration initiatives and smart city policies are inclined to think that the more connected it is the more it leads to inclusive societies. But the evidence indicated that connectivity is not enough to break structural inequalities but can strengthen divisions. The criticism of the policy strategies that overlook the multifacetedness of cohesion was correlated with this conclusion (Vasudavan et al., 2025; Logvinov et al., 2025). Interventions should be effective, hence wider perceptions of the issues that influence connectivity, such as economic differences, institutional structures, and cultural states.

The contribution to the doctrinal issues was the work that criticized the linear narratives that equated globalization to integration. In the past, the studies concentrated on convergence and boundary erosion, whereas the current studies are concentrated on fragmentation and differentiation (Andersen and Van Kempen, 2019; Gani, 2022). The presence of high intracluster cohesion and low intercluster ties supported this opinion and proved the idea that global connectivity assists not only in interacting but also in being divided simultaneously. This duality highlighted the necessity to rethink globalization as a process that generates both integration and fragmentation instead of focusing on a particular outcome.

In addition, the importance of a multi-dimensional conceptualization of cohesion was also stressed by the results. Cohesion was not homogeneous but was different in regions and scales and depended on structural, cultural, and technological aspects. This perspective aligned with the research which has revealed the dynamism of cohesion in digitally mediated environments (Marlowe et al., 2017; Ahmed, 2024). This mixture of an empirical network study and theoretic insights allowed the research to put forward a comprehensive account of the way cohesion and fragmentation are produced and sustained in world social systems.

5. Conclusion

The researchers discovered that social connectivity worldwide could be characterized not as an integrative process but as a complex amalgamation of both cohesion and fragmentation. The results have shown that the social cohesion is very concentrated in particular regional and relational groups, whereas the fragmentation remains in the global distances. This uneven distribution reflects the historical relations, geographic location, migration patterns and socio-economic differences in establishing the cross-border social interaction. The analysis has also concluded that structural divides are not always eliminated by digital connectivity as far-reaching as it can be. Instead, it is more likely to reinforce existing relations and patterns of interaction and form clustered networks with minimal bridging across the regions. The reality that the core-periphery structure still remained highlighted that connectivity remains uneven with certain countries receiving a disproportionate benefit at the expense of other countries being peripheral. It is these findings that underscore the need to revisit the issue of existing beliefs which hold that the greater the connectivity the higher the degree of social cohesion. A much finer idea is required, which recognizes that connectivity can not only lead to communication but also maintain discontinuity. New policies and studies should be context sensitive hence, to embrace the inherent inequalities and also come up with significant cross-regional connections.

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