Abstract. Groupthink phenomenon has been studying widely by a number of authors in the literature and now this topic is still getting a lot of attention. Nowadays, with the development of science and technology, many people often study and work via the Internet with online communities. Therefore, this paper studies phenomenon of Groupthink that may affect the quality of decision making for online communities in Korea. According to our analysis, Cohesion of a group does not affect closed-mindedness of the group. The results obtained in this study are potentially significant and essential for future researches about online community.

Keywords: Groupthink, Online Community (OC), Decision Quality

1 Introduction

Groupthink is a popular utilized theory in group decision-making researches, social psychology, management fields and organizational theory. The common expression of Groupthink is the group members with maximum effort to reduce the conflict and to achieve a consensus decision without considering the value of the alternative idea or viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from external influences (Hassan, Golkar, 2013). According to the importance and popularity of online groups, this paper is interested in study effects of Groupthink for online groups.

2 Literature Review

The Irving L. Janis’s groupthink model (1982) which consists of three major components: Antecedent conditions, Observable Symptoms and Consequences
resulting from symptoms. Howard Rheingold (1993) described online communities as social aggregations that emerge from the Net (Howard Rheingold, 1993). Jenny Preece (2000) approached online communities from the administrator’s viewpoint, emphasizing that developing them constitutes a practical activity and that a definition of an online communities is needed to guide the practice. According to Michail Tsikerdekis (2013), Groupthink behavior has a risk in group decision support systems (GDSS), and online groups; especially, it becomes well when individuals follow to the majority opinion and halt to suggest their own solutions for a problem.

3 Research Model and Hypothesis

Cohesion of the Group is defined as “group member inclination to get social bonds, and result in members sticking together and remaining united” (A. V. Carron, 1982). Organizational structure refers to the way which an organization arranges jobs, and people; for this, its work can be performed and its goals can be met (Nedal M. Elsaid et al., 2013).

Provocative situational contexts: Provocative situational contexts are caused by high stress from external threats, low self-esteem temporarily induced by the group’s perception of recent failures, excessive difficulties on current decision-making tasks and moral dilemma (Irving L. Janis, 1982).

Overestimation of the group includes the overestimation of the potential success of the solution or the abilities of the group (Hassan, Golkar, 2013).

Closed-mindedness includes Collective Rationalization and Out-group Stereotypes. The problem in a group arises when they see no fault to their plans, even if there is a considerable evidence as to the folly of their chosen course of action.

Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Cohesion of the group will have a positive effect on Overestimation of the group in OC
H2: Cohesion of the group will have a positive effect on Closed-mindedness in OC
H3: Organizational structural faults will have a positive effect on Overestimation of the group in OC
H4: Organizational structural faults will have a positive effect on Closed-mindedness in OC
H5: Provocative situational context will have a positive effect on Overestimation of the group in OC
H6: Provocative situational context will have a positive effect on Closed-mindedness in OC
H7: Overestimation of the group will have a positive effect on Symptoms of defective decision-making in OC
H8: Closed-mindedness will have a positive effect on Symptoms of defective decision-making in OC
H9: Symptoms of defective decision-making will have a positive effect on Low Quality of Decision-making in OC
4  Research method and analysis results

A total number of 249 responses were utilized in the analysis. The reliability of the questionnaire scale was tested using Cronbach’s alpha for total of thirty eight measurement items, which divided into 7 factors. The Cronbach’s alpha for scales in the model range from 0.739 to 0.946.

4.1  Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This study used CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) to test scale based on the EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis results.

Table 1.  CFA Model Fit indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model fit indicators</th>
<th>CMIN/DF</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>TLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended value</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&gt;0.8</td>
<td>&gt;0.7</td>
<td>&gt;0.7</td>
<td>&lt;0.08</td>
<td>&gt;0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained</td>
<td>2.178</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.757</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.892</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.  Reliability Analysis of CFA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>ORG</th>
<th>PRO</th>
<th>OVER</th>
<th>CLO</th>
<th>SYM</th>
<th>QUA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>0.914</td>
<td>0.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td>0.558</td>
<td>0.604</td>
<td>0.748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.  Discriminant Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SYM</th>
<th>QUA</th>
<th>OVER</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>PRO</th>
<th>CLO</th>
<th>ORG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYM</td>
<td>0.604</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>QUA</td>
<td>0.762</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVER</td>
<td>-0.408</td>
<td>-0.461</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>-0.349</td>
<td>-0.436</td>
<td>0.609</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>0.625</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>-0.134</td>
<td>-0.298</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO</td>
<td>0.679</td>
<td>0.581</td>
<td>-0.176</td>
<td>-0.143</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>0.558</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORG</td>
<td>0.624</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td>-0.308</td>
<td>-0.327</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>0.557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2  Hypothesis Testing

In this study, we confirmed the structural equation modeling using AMOS to test hypotheses, verify relationships of key variables are shown in Figure 1.
5 Conclusion

This study found a surprising outcome that Cohesion of the group does not affect to Closed-mindedness in online. A possible explanation for this finding may be related to the characteristics of communication and interaction of the online communities.

References