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Groupthink Remodeled: The Importance of Leadership, Time Pressure, and Methodical Decision-Making Procedures

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This article reviews the research on groupthink and analyzes the results and identifies areas of inconsistency. Based on these analyses and integration of research on the effects of time pressure on group decision making, a revised groupthink framework is presented. The revised framework alters the role of the leader, adjusts the linkages between groupthink antecedents and symptoms, and focuses attention on the importance of time pressure and methodical decision-making procedures on the prevention of groupthink. The revised framework attempts to correct a fundamental flaw of Janis' (1983) model—that is, to explain why within the same group, groupthink can occur during one decision-making situation and not another.

KEY WORDS: groupthink; leadership; time pressure; decision making.

INTRODUCTION

Over two decades ago (1972), Irving Janis coined the term "groupthink" to apply to "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action . . . a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing and moral judgement that results from in-group pressures" (p. 9). According to Janis, groups experiencing groupthink reach poor decisions as a result of a strong concurrence-seeking tendency that suppresses critical inquiry. A group suffering from groupthink tends to arrive at a decision before realistically appraising all available courses of action; thus, a faulty

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decision tends to result. The basis for his theory on this group decision-making phenomenon was derived from his historical analysis of the decisions of governmental decision-making groups that resulted in either major "fiascos" or complete successes.

The importance of this phenomenon and the justification of interest in this matter is that many important political and business decisions are currently made in groups. Many organizational decisions are made under high-pressure conditions that could result in serious consequences if a faulty solution is derived. In other words, these are decisions in which groupthink could be a contaminating factor and could lead to disastrous consequences for organizations.

From the origination of Janis's groupthink hypothesis to the present, two distinct patterns of research have developed: (1) case analysis, and (2) empirical analysis of part(s) of Janis's groupthink model. Case analysis involves a retrospective application of decision fiascos to the groupthink model (Smith, 1984; Hensley & Griffin, 1986; Moorhead, Ference, & Neck, 1991; Neck & Moorhead, 1992). Empirical analysis deals with laboratory tests of various aspects of Janis's framework (Flowers, 1977; Courtright, 1978; Callaway & Esser, 1984; Callaway, Marriott, & Esser, 1985; Leana, 1985). The results of these analyses were only partially consistent with Janis's groupthink model.

Considering the popularity of the concept, the scarcity of research examining its propositions is startling. It appears that the efforts to explain why groupthink occurs and how to prevent it remain in the early stages. As a result of this slow progress, our knowledge of groupthink and its useful applications remains somewhat limited.

One explanation for this slow progress is that factors other than those specified in Janis's model may be needed to complement his framework in order to explain the occurrence of defective decision making. Past studies have veered away from the original groupthink model to suggest that additional factors are needed to explain why groupthink occurs within small groups. Some of the variables that have been suggested to complement Janis's original framework were group composition (Luechauer, 1989), group polarization (Whyte, 1989), individual dominance (Callaway et al., 1985), and group cognitions (Neck & Manz, 1994). However, the presence of these factors does not necessarily help to explain why groupthink occurs, because as Janis states:

... groupthink is not simply a matter of fixed attributes of a group, nor is it a question of personalities that happen to be dominant within the group. If the same committee members show groupthink in making decisions at one time and not at another, the determining factors must lie in the circumstances of their deliberations, not in the fixed attributes of the individuals who make up the group.

The determining factors seems to be variables that can be changed and lead to more and productive norms . . . (Janis, 1983, p. 158)

The revised framework presented in this paper is consistent with Janis's discussion by incorporating an explanation to indicate why groupthink occurs within the same group in one decision-making situation but is prevented in another. The primary distinguishing feature of the revised framework is the specification of the moderator variables, closed leadership style and methodical decision-making procedures. It should be noted that Janis incorporated the leadership element indirectly in his framework through the antecedent condition, lack of a tradition of impartial leadership. However, this indirectness fails to emphasize the significance of leadership style on the occurrence of groupthink. Our reconceptualization of the role of the leader is a more direct approach that offers specific leader behaviors and procedures that can encourage or prevent defective decision making by a group. This type of leader is defined in terms of specific behaviors of the leader (Flowers, 1977). The closed style leader does not encourage divergent opinions from all group members, does not emphasize the importance of reaching a wise decision, and states his or her opinions up front in a forceful manner.

Additionally, Janis did include methodical decision-making procedures as a secondary antecedent condition; however, this inclusion does not highlight the importance of methodical decision-making procedures in terms of its impact on the prevention of groupthink and it does not offer specifics into the types of procedures to utilize. Our goal, and the major contribution of this paper, is to show that in situations where the antecedent conditions of groupthink are present, the variables that determine whether or not groupthink symptoms appear and thus whether decision-making defects occur is the presence or absence of closed style leadership behaviors and methodical decision-making procedures. This attempts to correct a fundamental flaw of Janis's model and past groupthink research—that is, to explain why within the same group, groupthink occurs during one decision-making situation and not another. Additionally, the inclusion of leadership style and methodical decision-making procedures as distinct elements in the model, as opposed to Janis's indirect approach, should ensure that leadership style and decision-making procedures' impact on groupthink will be empirically tested in the future. The inconsistencies in the past groupthink studies could possibly be the result of omitting these variables in the studies.

The other differentiating features of this enhanced framework, in contrast to those in Janis's model, are the additional antecedent condition of time pressure and the relationship between the antecedent conditions and

the groupthink symptoms. These features are discussed in detail later in the paper.

The purposes of this paper are fivefold. First, a brief summary of Janis's original groupthink model is provided. Second, the groupthink research to date is reviewed, and the results of this research and its inconsistencies are analyzed. Third, through our understanding of why these inconsistencies occurred, a revised groupthink framework is presented. Fourth, propositions to test this enhanced model are presented. And, finally, implications of the enhanced model are discussed.

REVIEW OF GROUPTHINK LITERATURE

The chief proposition of the framework proposed by Janis (1983) is that when a group is moderately or highly cohesive, the presence of specific antecedent conditions (in addition to cohesiveness) increases the chances of the development of groupthink symptoms (Janis, 1983, p. 245). Additionally, whenever a group displays most of the symptoms of groupthink, the group should exhibit specific, observable decision-making defects which result in a low probability of a successful outcome, i.e., a low probability of unanticipated setbacks not occurring and obtaining the decision-maker's objectives (Janis, 1983, p. 175).

Groupthink has been studied by researchers from several disciplines. These studies, depicting the two distinct patterns of case analysis and empirical analysis, are summarized in Table 1. It should be noted that one of the purposes of this manuscript is to examine the literature that encompasses the groupthink body of knowledge. As a result, the scope of our review involves research that are tests and/or conceptualizations focusing directly on the groupthink framework as opposed to other group process issues that indirectly relates to Janis' Framework such as controversy (e.g., Tjosvold, 1985), strategic consensus (e.g., Bourgeois, 1985), devil's advocacy (e.g., Cosier & Rechner, 1985) and strategic decision-making in general (e.g., Janis, 1989).

Case Analytic Studies

Case analyses of groupthink primarily involve a retrospective application of Janis's groupthink model to decision fiascos in which the author(s) show how the fiascos contained the major elements of the groupthink framework — antecedent conditions, symptoms of groupthink, and decision-making defects. The literature review revealed four such analyses: Smith's (1984) analysis of the Iran Hostage Rescue Mission; Hensley and Griffin's (1986) study of the Kent State Gym Controversy; and

Table 1. Review of Groupthink Literature

Author(s)/year	Variables tested/discussed, research design	Summary of results
Case analysis		
Neck and Moorhead (1992)	Utilized the groupthink framework to analyze the avoidance of groupthink during the jury deliberations in the trial of U.S. v. John DeLorean.	Showed many of antecedent conditions were present—but groupthink did not occur due to moderating impact of methodical decision-making procedures.
Moorhead, Ference, and Neck (1991)	Attempts to explain the space shuttle disaster in terms of Janis's groupthink model.	Showed all antecedent conditions, groupthink symptoms, and a majority of defective decision symptoms were present.
Hensley and Griffin (1986)	Analyzes the Kent State decision and tries to explain the fiasco in terms of Janis's groupthink framework.	Showed all antecedent conditions, all of the 8 groupthink symptoms except "illusion of unanimity," and a majority of defective decision symptoms were present.
Smith (1984)	Attempts to use Janis's groupthink framework to explain the U.S. hostage rescue mission fiasco in Iran.	Showed all groupthink symptoms and the first four decision-making defects were present. Antecedent conditions were not examined.
Empirical Studies		
Moorhead and Montanari (1986)	Attempted to test Janis's model of groupthink. Used path analysis to examine the effects of the antecedents on the other variables that follow.	The results indicated that insulation of the group most strongly affects group performance.
Callaway, Marriott, and Esser (1985)	The effects of decision-making procedures (task structure) and dominance (an individual factor) on the quality of group decision making, anxiety, and symptoms of groupthink. Anova was used.	Groups with highly dominant members made higher quality decisions, exhibited lower anxiety, and took more time to reach a decision. This group type also tended to make more statements.
Leanna (1985)	Tested the effects of group cohesiveness and leader behavior on defective decision making. A 2 x 2 factorial design was used.	Noncohesive groups engaged in more self-censorship and teams with directive leaders proposed fewer alternatives to solutions.

Table I. Continued

Author(s)/(year)	Variables tested/discussed, research design	Summary of results
Callaway and Esser (1984)	The lab test focused on manipulating group cohesiveness and adequacy of decision procedures. A 2 x 2 factorial design was used.	(1) Highest quality decisions were made by groups with intermediate cohesiveness. (2) Poorest decision were made by high cohesive groups without adequate decision procedures. (3) The presence of groupthink tended to be characterized by a lack of disagreement and a high level of confidence in the group's decisions.
Tetlock (1979)	(1) Variables studied were (A) The tendency to process policy relevant information in simplistic and biased ways: (B) The tendency to evaluate one's own group highly and to evaluate one's domestic and international opponents highly. (2) A content analysis study of archival records was used.	Groupthink decision makers in relation to non-groupthink ones were more simplistic in their perceptions of policy issues and made more positive references to the United States and its allies (own group). Also, groupthink decision makers did not make significantly more negative references to their opponents.
Courtright (1978)	The variables tested were cohesiveness and the induction of decision parameters. A 2 x 3 factorial design was used.	(1) Study showed that groupthink can be studied in lab. (2) Study suggested that a "non-Janis" variable called the presence or absence of disagreement (conflict, hostility) among group members may be the best indicator of groupthink vs. non-groupthink groups. (3) Study did not show strong primary support for existence of groupthink.
Flowers (1977)	Tested the effects of leadership style (open vs. closed) and cohesiveness (high vs. low) on decision making in a crisis situation. A 2 x 2 factorial design was used.	Showed closed leaders received fewer suggested solution to problems from their teams, level of cohesion did not make a difference in groupthink effects, and the degree of power of the leader may be an important variable to include in groupthink framework.
Conceptual developments Luechauer (1989)	(1) Personality variable (2) Fantasy themes	This article applies a personality variable (the self-monitoring propensity of group members) to a group's susceptibility to groupthink; also, fantasy themes may act as a mechanism to lead the group to groupthink.
Montanari and Moorhead (1989)	Groupthink assessment inventory	The GAI represents a theory-based and empirically-tested measuring technique for the assessment of groupthink variables.
Whyte (1989)	(1) Risk seeking when choice between losses ("framing") (2) Uniformity pressures (3) Group polarization (4) Relation of above three items to groupthink	Article argues that groupthink is an incomplete explanation for the occurrence of decision fiascoes; polarization in group decision making and how group members frame decisions and choose between alternatives need to be considered.
Manz and Sims (1982)	Groupthink framework applied to autonomous work groups.	Autonomous work groups are likely to be vulnerable to groupthink; however, more research needed in their area.
Moorhead (1982)	The major components of Janis's groupthink hypothesis are discussed.	Developed hypotheses to test the propositions of groupthink proposed by Janis.

Moorhead, Ference, and Neck's (1991) study of the Space Shuttle Disaster. Additionally, one case study utilized the groupthink framework to analyze the jury deliberations in the trial of U.S. v. John DeLoorean — a situation in which groupthink did not occur in spite of the occurrence of groupthink antecedent conditions (Neck & Moorhead, 1992).

Although the case study approach yields a large amount of information and provides fascinating reading, the accuracy and applicability of these results in explaining the groupthink phenomenon can be questioned. The possibilities of truly unique and nonrepresentative groups, of researcher bias, and of inaccuracies in retrospective descriptions of group deliberations can reduce the robustness of case analysis conclusions (Forsyth, 1983). Therefore, case analytic findings are useful for general anecdotal support but not as primary evidence of the occurrence of groupthink. Therefore, the use of these decision fiasco case studies as primary evidence towards proving the occurrence of groupthink is debatable.

Empirical Studies

The empirical studies found in the groupthink literature utilized laboratory tests of various aspects of Janis's framework. Flowers (1977), Courtright (1978), Callaway and Esser (1984), Callaway et al. (1985), Leana (1985), and Moorhead and Montanari (1986) attempted to empirically validate the occurrence of groupthink in a laboratory setting.

For example, in the earliest study of this type, Flowers (1977) explored the suggestion that leadership style (open vs. closed) and cohesiveness should interact so that groupthink in the decision process is most likely to occur under conditions of high group cohesiveness and closed leadership (p. 890). She found that groups with an open leadership style produced significantly more suggested solutions and use of available facts than closed leadership style regardless of the cohesion level.

Along the same lines, Leana (1985) tested the effect of group cohesiveness and leader behavior on Janis's symptoms of defective decision making. Her results, consistent with those of Flower's earlier study, suggested that groups with directive leaders proposed and discussed fewer alternative solutions to the problem than did groups with leaders who encouraged more member participation.

Although the empirical groupthink studies seemed to provide at least some degree of support for the existence of groupthink, the utility of this support in terms of the occurrence of groupthink is questionable because of these studies' error of omission (Moorhead & Montanari, 1986). These empirical studies failed to test Janis's entire theoretical framework; each

of these studies only analyzed parts of the model. No attempts were made to assess the entire framework — the antecedent conditions, the symptoms, the decision-making defects, and the decision outcome.

Moorhead and Montanari (1986), however, attempted to empirically investigate Janis's groupthink model in a comprehensive manner. The results provided limited support for the symptoms and defects postulated by Janis and for the causal sequence specified in the model. Additionally, they found that the relationship between groupthink-induced decision defects and outcomes were not as strong as Janis stated. Due to their findings, the authors were prompted to suggest that many intervening and/or moderating factors not included in Janis's framework may influence decision outcomes. In other words, additional variables may need to be incorporated in Janis's original framework to explain the occurrence of groupthink.

In sum, although a moderate amount of groupthink research exists, little progress has really been made toward explaining why groupthink occurs in decision-making groups. The enhanced groupthink model attempts to integrate the findings of the research to date and provide a better explanation of the conditions under which groupthink does or does not occur or can be prevented.

REVISED GROUPTHINK FRAMEWORK

The model, Fig. 1, differs from that of Janis's model in the following respects: inclusion of additional antecedent conditions, modification of the relationship between the antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms, the insertion of the moderating effect of methodical decision-making procedures, and the addition of the moderator variable, closed leadership style. These enhancements are based on empirical research in both the groupthink and group processes literature, as well as Janis's original case study analyses of decision fiascos.

Additional Antecedent Conditions

Antecedent conditions Type A and B-1 are the same as described by Janis (1982). Two secondary antecedent conditions of the provocative situational context (B-2) type are included in the enhanced model. These include (1) a highly consequential decision, and (2) pressures due to constraints of time.

A highly consequential decision is one in which the outcome of the decision greatly impacts the members of the group as well as other outside parties. Additionally, a highly consequential decision usually is associated with unexpectedness and sense of urgency which erodes the opportunity

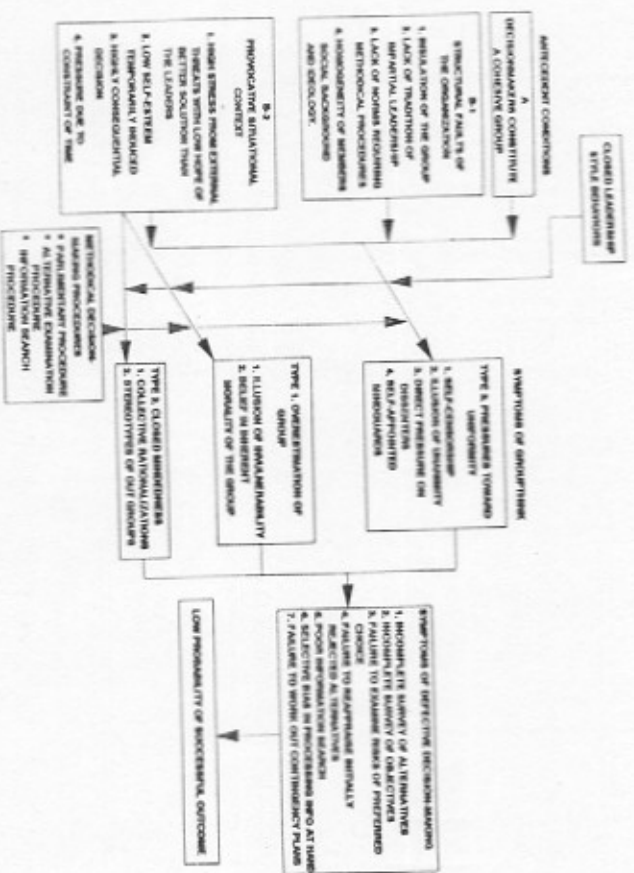


Fig. 1. Alternative Groupthink Model.

for a truly informed group decision (Gouran, 1982). This element deserves inclusion in the enhanced model because all the decision fiascoes that Janis studied as a basis for his theory were highly consequential decisions.

Pressures due to constraints of time is a perceptual condition in which members of the group feel they have a very limited amount of time in which to make a decision. This was included indirectly in Janis's model as a function of the antecedent condition, group cohesion. Time constraint is included in the enhanced model as a separate antecedent condition for several reasons. First, Janis's case study of the Vietnam policy-making decision and Moorhead et al.'s (1991) case study of the space shuttle Challenger decision showed that groupthink was partially induced by time pressure. Janis's explanation for this was that time pressure affected the mental processes of the decision makers and increased the cohesiveness of the policy-making group (Janis, 1982). Second, research to date on the effects of time pressure on group decision making indicates this condition

critically impacts the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of decisions made by small groups.

Kelly and McGrath (1985) attempted one such study. Groups performed two tasks of a single task type for two trials of different durations (10 minutes followed by 20 minutes or 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes). Group members working in the longer time period produced products that were superior in quality than the other shorter time group. The authors' explanation of these findings was that the short time groups had a low frequency of interpersonal behaviors, i.e., answers, questions, agreements, disagreements, etc. This resulted in the reduced time group's suffering from more stress, feeling that the task was more difficult, and feeling less satisfied with the resulting solution than the group that was given the extra time. Thus, the study tends to indicate that the effectiveness of a group's decision is a function of time pressure.

Iscenber's (1981) study of the impact of time pressure on group decision making resulted in findings closely paralleling those of the Kelly and McGrath study. In this study, 18 four-person groups were given a decision-making task to perform in one of three time pressure conditions: 3 minutes (high), 5 minutes (moderate), and 15 minutes (low). Time pressures caused arousal of group members. This arousal had facilitative and then inhibitory effects of decision-making quality as arousal level (time pressure) increased. Isenberg explained that time pressure caused an increase in the vertical structuring of small groups. In other words, it caused an increase in the gap in the amount of communication between the most and the least communicative group members.

These two studies suggest that high time pressure leads to poor quality decisions by the group. Since the final outcome of the groupthink framework is a low probability of a successful (high quality) decision, this research seems to support time pressure as an additional antecedent condition.

Relationship Between the Antecedent Conditions and Groupthink Symptoms

In Janis's groupthink model, no specificity between which antecedent conditions led to which groupthink symptoms existed. In other words, all the antecedent conditions led to all the groupthink symptoms. However, it has been recently suggested that in order to enhance the utility of the groupthink theory, the links among antecedents and symptoms need to be refined (Turner, Probst, & Pratkanis, & Leve, 1992). Moorhead and Montanari's (1986) comprehensive study of Janis's framework provided only limited support for the causal sequence specified in Janis's model. Conse-

quently, the revised framework incorporates previous groupthink research by depicting a more specific relationship between antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms. The connections are as follows:

1. *Type A antecedent conditions may lead to Type 3 symptoms of groupthink.* In other words, the cohesiveness of the group may result in pressure toward uniformity symptoms within the decision-making group. Specifically, research suggests that members of cohesive groups are often reluctant to respond honestly to one another's contributions or to make objective appraisals for fear of hurting feelings, wounding egos, or otherwise disrupting the group's rather fragile sense of solidarity (Gouran, 1982; Janis, 1982).

2. *Type B1 antecedent conditions lead to Type 3 symptoms of groupthink.* The structural faults of the organization may result in pressure toward uniformity symptoms. For example, the insulation of the group from external sources may result in pressures toward uniformity within the group and thus in deterioration of decision-making quality. Specifically, it has been argued that the detachment of the group from outside sources can lead to a group's loss of perspective and objectivity. Members who want to end a crisis situation by hurriedly reaching a decision may begin to bolster their apparent choice by unconsciously focusing on information and arguments that are consistent with their choice — that is, the group may ignore pertinent information from external sources (Gouran, 1980; Janis, Mahl, Kagan, & Holt, 1969; Mills, 1968).

3. *Type B2 antecedent conditions may lead to Type 1 & Type 2 symptoms of groupthink.* In short, the provocative situational context of the group may result in closed mindedness and overestimation of the group. For example, it has been argued that high stress from external threats and temporary low self-esteem that a group may perceive can lead to closed mindedness within the decision-making group (Gouran, 1982; Stein & Tanter, 1980).

In summary, this research suggests that decision makers individually or collectively, operating under stress and shaken expectations, will simplify complexity and reduce uncertainty through cognitive shortcuts. Stereotypic thinking is one such shortcut (Gouran, 1982; Stein & Tanter, 1980). Additionally, it is argued that a group's perceived high stress will increase its susceptibility to judgment error (Gouran, 1982). We argue that one type of judgment error could be the group's overestimation of itself.

4. *Type B2 antecedent conditions may lead to Type 3 groupthink symptoms.* One example supporting this sequence involves the antecedent of time pressure and its impact on the uniformity symptom of illusion of unanimity. As Fisher (1980) states:

Group members' functioning under severe time pressure simply don't have sufficient time to proceed through all the steps of decision modification in order to achieve consensus on their decisions. Therefore they resort to shortcuts to decision making such as majority votes. The inevitable result, of course, is false or superficial consensus. (p. 80)

This clearer relation between antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms should facilitate a more direct understanding of the relationships that actually result in groupthink contamination of and groupthink prevention in small groups.

Methodical Decision-Making Procedures

The next enhancement to Janis' original framework is that of the moderating variable methodical decision-making procedures for information search and appraisal. Specifically, we propose that the utilization of methodical decision-making procedure should ensure that the group adheres to a highly structured and systematic decision-making process. Thus, this should serve as a mechanism toward avoidance of the groupthink symptoms of pressure toward uniformity by promoting constructive criticism, nonconformity, and open-mindedness within the decision-making group.

It may be important at this point to highlight the distinguishing features of a moderator variable. In general terms, a moderator is a variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent variable and a dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Thus, moderation implies that the causal relation between two variables changes as a function of the moderator variable. Consequently, the inclusion of the moderator variables in our model does *not* suggest that closed leadership style behaviors and methodical decision-making procedures cause the presence of groupthink symptoms and thus defective decision making, but, rather these behaviors moderate the relationship between antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms.

Furthermore, it is argued that "whereas moderator variables specify when certain effects will hold, mediators [mediator variables] speak to how or why such effects occur" (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1176). Thus, closed leadership style behaviors and methodical decision-making procedures specify not "why" or "how" antecedents lead to symptoms, but rather "when" the groupthink antecedent conditions will lead to groupthink symptoms.

In explaining the use of a moderator variable, Baron and Kenny (1986) state that this type of variable is introduced when a relation holds in one setting, but not in another. In the revised framework, the presence of closed leadership style behaviors and the utilization of methodical de-

cision-making procedures explains why, within the same group, groupthink is supported by one decision-making situation and is prevented in another.

The inclusion of the variable methodical decision-making procedures is supported by Neck and Moorhead's (1992) groupthink case study of the jury deliberations in the trial of U.S. v. John DeLoe. This analysis suggested that one factor that accounts for why groupthink may not occur in situations in which groupthink antecedent conditions are present — is, the presence of methodical decision-making procedures such as parliamentary procedure, alternative examination procedure, and information search procedure (Neck & Moorhead, 1992). Additionally, one empirical groupthink study provides support for this moderating variable in that it found that high cohesive groups without adequate decision procedures made poor decisions (Callaway & Esser, 1984).

Closed Leadership Style Behaviors — A Moderator Variable

The critical element that primarily distinguishes this enhanced groupthink model from that of Janis's is the introduction of the moderator variable — closed leadership style behaviors. These behaviors include (1) does not encourage member participation, (2) does state his/her opinions at the beginning of the meeting, (3) does not encourage divergent opinions from all group members, and (4) does not emphasize the importance of reaching a wise decision. In this line of reasoning, the antecedents of groupthink lead to symptoms only if the leadership characteristics of a closed style leader are present.

Since these leader behaviors promote groupthink, this suggests that these behaviors characterize an ineffective group leader. This assumption is supported in the leadership research. Specifically, it has been argued that an effective leader of a decision-making group is one who serves as a consultant, advisor, facilitator, establishes a climate that is conducive to expression of both feelings and ideas, and relinquishes control, allowing the group to make final decisions on appropriate issues (Manz & Sims, 1987; Yukl, 1979; Bradford, 1976). Indeed, these effective leader role descriptions are the antithesis of the ineffective closed leadership style behaviors described in our enhanced framework.

More specifically, closed leadership style behaviors should promote defective decision making in two ways: (1) facilitation of concurrence seeking, and (2) establishment of a group norm of closed inquiry. First, closed leadership style behaviors should *facilitate* concurrence seeking within a decision-making group, and thus result in defective decision making. This contention is supported by the argument that in all groups a pressure toward consensus prevails unless the leader deliberately counteracts such

pressure by encouraging diversity of viewpoints (Maier, 1950). Similarly, Janis's (1982) examination of the Watergate Scandal clearly indicated that Richard Nixon's closed leadership style promoted a concurrence seeking tendency among the decision makers which led to a clearly defective decision. Second, it has been argued that the leadership style behaviors exhibited by the group leader will strongly influence the norms adopted by the group (Gillette & McCollom, 1990). Consequently, we argue that closed leadership style behaviors should promote the establishment of a group norm of closed inquiry. In fact, research suggests that closed leadership style behaviors should promote the establishment and maintenance of a group norm that may develop within the group an atmosphere of closed inquiry that should evoke conformity with the leaders' view (Janis, 1982).

On the other hand, the inverse should occur in groups with open leadership style behaviors. That is, open leadership style behaviors should prevent defective decision making by eroding the concurrence seeking tendency of a decision-making group through the leader's behavior of encouraging diversity of viewpoints (Maier, 1950), and by promoting a group norm of open inquiry into alternative courses of action (Janis, 1982).

It is important to emphasize that the two factors (concurrence seeking and a group norm of closed inquiry) may in fact manifest themselves in the group in the *absence* of a leader exhibiting closed leadership style behaviors. In fact, as Janis' groupthink framework implies, concurrence seeking pressures should emerge within a group displaying the symptoms of groupthink — regardless of the leadership style of the group leader. Consequently, we argue that the leadership style behaviors exhibited by the group leader serve not to *create*, but rather to either *facilitate* (closed style leader behaviors) or *counteract* (open style leader behaviors) the concurrence seeking and closed inquiry pressures existing within the decision-making group that displays groupthink antecedent conditions. If a leader performs this counteractive function, groupthink antecedent symptoms should not emerge, and thus the decision-making process will tend to be of higher quality (Janis, 1983, 1989).

An underlying assumption of this argument centers around the contention that a leader's function is to exert a counteractive influence on the group. It has been stated that "leadership functions to counteract those influences acting on a group which, if left unattended, would prevent the members from achieving their goals [e.g., a high quality decision]" (Gouran, 1982, p. 150). Similarly, we argue that open-style leadership behaviors are necessary to counteract the concurrence-seeking pressures acting within a group exhibiting groupthink antecedents; and, thus, groupthink symptoms and defective decision making should be prevented. On the other hand, closed style leadership behaviors promoting concurrence-seeking and closed

inquiry should foster, rather than counteract, the conformity pressures operating within the group and produce defective decision making.

Thus, the concurrence seeking tendency and closed inquiry atmosphere of a closed leadership style group should lead to the broad groupthink symptoms of overestimation and closed-mindedness, and thus, defects in the decision-making process. In fact, empirical evidence suggests that groups with closed leader styles produce significantly fewer suggested solutions and use fewer available facts to reach a decision than groups with open leader styles (Flowers, 1977; Leana, 1985).

Support for the Moderator Variable Closed Leadership Style Behaviors

Various forms of evidence can be found to support the inclusion of closed leadership style behaviors (moderator variable) in the enhanced model: Janis's case analyses, prior empirical results, and Janis's prescriptions for preventing groupthink.

Bay of Pigs vs. Cuban Missile Crisis. First, Janis's (1983) account of why the same group succumbed to groupthink in one decision (Bay of Pigs) and not in another (Cuban Missile Crisis) supports this revised framework. In these decisions, the presence of a closed leadership style was the difference in whether or not groupthink occurred. In the Cuban Missile Crisis decision, Kennedy changed his behavior from his behavior in the Bay of Pigs decision to that of a more nondirective, open leader. He did not state his initial position forcefully and he emphasized the need to canvas alternatives (pp. 142-145). Kennedy even abstained from attending some of the meetings of the group in order to assure that his presence would not bias the decision making. As Robert Kennedy, the president's brother, remarked:

... I felt there was less true give and take with the President in the room. There was the danger that by indicating his own view and leanings, he would cause others just to fall in line . . . (p. 142)

Additionally, as White House staff member T. Sorensen recalled:

... one of the remarkable aspects of those meetings was a sense of complete equality . . . we were fifteen individuals on our own, representing the president and not different departments. Assistant secretaries differed vigorously with their secretaries; I participated much more freely than I ever had in an NSC (National Security Council) meeting; and the absence of the president encouraged everyone to speak his mind . . . (p. 144)

A careful review of Janis's comparison of these two decisions made by the same group seems to support the enhanced model's inclusion of the moderator variable, closed leadership style behaviors. In other words, the

element that seemed to distinguish why groupthink occurred in the Bay of Pigs decision and not in the Cuban Missile Crisis situation is the president's change in his behavior from one of a closed leader to one exhibiting behaviors of an open-styled leader.

Prior Empirical Studies. Two prior studies discussed earlier, Flowers (1977) and Leana (1985), add support to the enhanced model. Both of these studies were consistent in their findings by showing that groups with closed leaders produced fewer alternative solutions to the problem than did groups with leaders who encouraged more member participation.

Janis's (1983) *recommendations for preventing groupthink*. Janis prescribed three methods of preventing groupthink in small groups. These recommendations add support to the enhanced groupthink model in that two of the three prescriptions involve some aspect of changing the leadership style from closed to open. These two groupthink prevention methods that add support to the model are as follows:

1. The leader of a policy-forming group should assign the role of critical evaluator to each member, encouraging the group to give high priority to airing objections and doubts. This practice needs to be reinforced by the leaders' acceptance of criticism of his or her own judgments in order to discourage the members from soft-pedaling their disagreements.

2. The leaders in an organization's hierarchy, when assigning a policy-planning mission to a group, should be impartial instead of stating preferences and expectations at the outset. This practice requires each leader to limit his or her briefings to unbiased statements about the scope of the problem and the limitation of the available resources, without advocating specific proposals he or she would like to see adopted. This allows the conferees the opportunity to develop an atmosphere of open inquiry and to explore impartially a wide range of policy alternatives.

As a result this model proposes to correct a fundamental flaw of Janis's model and the research associated with groupthink—that is, to explain why, within the same group, groupthink occurs during one decision-making situation and not in another. This flaw is corrected in the enhanced model through the inclusion of the moderator variables, closed leadership style behaviors and methodical decision-making procedures.

PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

The enhanced model serves as a catalyst in developing the following groupthink propositions that can be empirically tested in the future:

Proposition 1. Groups that evidence high degrees of Type A, B1, and Type B-2 antecedent conditions will *not* exhibit Type 3 symptoms of groupthink in the presence of an open-style leader and/or when the group utilizes

methodical decision-making procedures. Groups that evidence high degrees of Type A, B1, and Type B-2 antecedent conditions will exhibit Type 3 symptoms of groupthink in the presence of a leader portraying closed leadership style behaviors and/or when the group does not use methodical decision-making procedures.

Proposition 2. Groups that evidence high degrees of B-2 antecedent conditions will not exhibit Type 1 and Type 2 groupthink symptoms in the presence of an open style leader and/or when the group establishes methodical decision-making procedures.

Proposition 3. Groups that evidence high degrees of B-2 antecedent conditions will exhibit Type 1 and Type 2 groupthink symptoms in the presence of a leader portraying closed leadership style behaviors and/or when the group does not establish methodical decision-making procedures.

Propositions 1-3 serve to test the moderating impact of leadership behaviors and methodical decision-making procedures between antecedents and symptoms and the specific relations between antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms, rather than the general relation that all antecedent conditions lead to all groupthink symptoms.

IMPLICATIONS OF MODEL

The revised framework should serve as a catalyst for the modification of empirical groupthink research to ensure comprehensive coverage of the model, as opposed to testing only parts of the framework. The focus of this research should examine the differentiating features of the enhanced model. The moderating effect of closed leadership style behaviors on the relation between groupthink antecedent conditions and symptoms should be examined, as well as the causal relation between antecedent conditions and groupthink symptoms. Additionally, the focus of this research should encompass the moderating impact of methodical decision-making procedures between groupthink antecedent conditions and symptoms.

It is important to note that while laboratory studies may be the best way to address some of these issues, the full spectrum of behavioral research methods, including comparative case studies and field experiments in natural settings could be used to further refine and test the theoretical positions advanced here. For example, one method of empirically examining the applicability of our revised groupthink framework in an organizational setting would involve a training intervention based field study. More specifically, a field study similar to that of Latham & Saari (1979) modeling-based training design and Frayne & Latham's (1987) self-management training methodology could be utilized focusing on a group-level analysis. The design would include two groups (one receiving

groupthink prevention training the other not receiving any training—the control group). Therefore, our reconceptualized groupthink perspective would be compared to a non-treatment control group in terms of its impact on group behavior and performance. The groupthink prevention training would focus on each of the major components of our revised groupthink hypothesis addressed in this paper. Pre- and post-measures would be collected to assess the impact of the groupthink prevention training. The measures would be of a multiple nature including team performance and decision-making effectiveness.

Additionally, if the revised model is supported by empirical work, it will be the catalyst toward developing better prescriptions for training managers and group members to avoid groupthink in decision-making situations. Prescriptions could be in the form of: (1) suggestions for when a leader might alter her or his leadership behaviors which may depend on the nature of the group and the presence or absence of the antecedent conditions, and (2) establishment of methodical decision-making procedures such as parliamentary procedures.

In summary, the enhanced model is only the initial step of progress toward shaping our understanding of groupthink into a useful tool for building successful decision-making groups. This model is the first step towards increasing groupthink's applicability to "real world" decision-making groups. Subsequent steps should be empirical tests of this model, followed by additional theory development. And, finally, as this area of study begins to reach its destination through the comprehensive understanding of why groupthink occurs, the final advance should be training programs for managers and group members on how to avoid groupthink in decision-making situations.

CONCLUSIONS

This article argued that the original framework proposed by Janis is an incomplete explanation for the occurrence of groupthink in small groups. As a result, an enhanced model has been proposed to explain why groupthink can contaminate the same group at one time and not at another. The primary differentiating features of this enhanced model is the inclusion of the moderator variables, closed leadership style behaviors, and methodical decision-making procedures. The basis for this enhanced framework is Janis's original analyses of decision fiascoes, research on groupthink to date, and group-processes research involving the effect of time pressure on group decisions.

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