A Managerial Perspective on Common Identity-Based and Common Bond-Based Groups in Non-Governmental Organizations. Patterns of Interaction, Attachment and Social Network Configuration

Elena–Mădălina VĂTĂMĂNESCU
College of Management
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania
6 Povernei St., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, 010643
madalina.vatamanescu@facultateademanagement.ro

Florina PÎNZARU
College of Management
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania
6 Povernei St., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, 010643
florina.pînzaru@facultateademanagement.ro

Lucian Claudiu ANGHEL
College of Management
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania
6 Povernei St., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, 010643
lucian.anghel@facultateademanagement.ro

Abstract. *The paper approaches the common identity and common bond theories in analyzing the group patterns of interaction, their causes, processes and outcomes from a managerial perspective. The distinction between identity and bond refers to people's different reasons for being in a group, stressing out whether they like the group as a whole — identity-based attachment, or they like individuals in the group — bond-based attachment. While members of the common identity groups report feeling more attached to their group as a whole than to their fellow group members and tend to perceive others in the group as interchangeable, in bond-based attachment people feel connected to each other and less to the group as a whole, loyalty or attraction to the group stemming from their attraction primarily to certain members in the group. At this level, the main question concerns with the particularities of common identity-based or common bond-based groups regarding social interaction, the participatory architecture of the group, the levels of personal and work engagement in acting like a cohesive group. In order to address pertinently this issue, the current work focuses on a qualitative research which comprised in-depth (semi-structured) interviews with several project coordinators from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To make the investigation more complex and clear, the research relies on social network analysis which is indicative of the group dynamics and configuration, highlighting the differences between common identity-based and common bond-based groups.*

Keywords: common identity, common bond theory, NGOs, groups, social networking.

Introduction

Group members have certain common goals, but simultaneously, they have their individual goals or interests. At this level, occasionally, achieving common goals is in conflict with the fulfilment of individual goals. Interaction in social groups may turn into a burden when an individual's goal fulfilment does not only dependent on his/her own behaviour, but also on other individuals' behaviour within the group. Thus, the more a member's goal achievement is related to the other actors' behaviour, the stronger the interdependencies are.

A salient theory about the formation of social groups assumes that individuals join groups driven by either strong personal connections with other members or by the interest in the group as an entity. Thus, depending on the main motivation of people, spontaneously created groups can be classified as either social or topical. This theoretical categorization is known as common identity and common bond and affirms that the two types of groups have different and well-defined features that characterize them in terms of group dynamics, patterns of interaction, subgroup structure, motivation policies, managerial intervention or moderation, individual commitment etc.

The theory has been widely commented and elaborated by social scientists from a theoretical perspective and through small-scale experiments, but a validation over large-scale datasets together with the development of rigorous, automated methodologies to distinguish the group types is missing (Grabowicz, Aiello, Eguíluz & Jaimes, 2013).

Moreover, in recent years, much of the research on identity-based and bond-based commitment has fallen back upon laboratory experiments to investigate the consequences of different types of group commitment. Due to the controlled nature of the psychological laboratory, the question remains whether methods used to induce identity-based and bond-based commitment would be powerful enough to have behavioural effects in natural environments. Also, as Farzan, Dabbish, Kraut and Postmes (2011, p. 2) argue that "most social psychological experiments lack adequate measures of long-term behavioural commitment and focus instead on short-term psychological variables such as self-reported attachment and social influence".

Due to the fact that common identity and common bond are yet to be discussed, the current paper intends to approach the common identity and common bond theories by analyzing the group's patterns of interaction, their causes, processes and outcomes. The emphasis lays on a qualitative research which comprises in-depth (semi-structured) interviews with several project coordinators from non-governmental organizations and on the social network analysis which is indicative of the group dynamics and configuration, highlighting the differences between common identity-based and common bond-based groups.

Literature review

Common identity and common bond are two concepts rooted in the social psychological research of voluntary real-world groups (Prentice et al., 1994). The difference between identity and bond relies on people's distinct reasons for being in a group – either they admire the social group as a whole, developing an identity-based attachment, or they admire individuals in the group, developing bond-based attachment (Back, 1951). Whenever individuals feel identity-based attachment to a group, they are liable to perceive others in the group as exchangeable (Turner, 1985). This situation implies that identity remains mainly stable in spite of the turnover in membership. On the contrary, in bond-based attachment, individuals feel interdependences between each other and less to the group as a social entity. In this case, if some members leave the group, many others tend to drift away as well.

In many situations, the emphasis lays on the behavioural commitment of group members towards their group. The psychological research provides evidence that individuals become committed to a group in two different ways: through group members' internalization of specific features of the group as an entity (e.g., norms and stereotypes, common interests, group history, competition with out-groups, shared views etc), which is the basis for commitment to common identity groups, or through interpersonal attractions among individual group members, which is the basis for commitment to common bond groups (Prentice, Miller & Lightdale, 1994; Ren, Kraut & Kiesler, 2007; Tausczik et al., 2014).

Prior research in social psychology stresses out that bond based and identity based attachments have different antecedents. On the one hand, the foundation of bond based attachment is represented by interpersonal relations

among individual group members and relies on communication and recip-rocal self disclosure, repeated exposure, interpersonal similarity (Berscheid & Reis, 1998). On the other hand, identity-based commitment stems from a connection to the group as a whole. It is very likely for individuals to iden-tify with a group if it consists of a well-defined repertoire of common attri-butes, purposes, goals, homogeneity among members, and obvious distinc-tions from the out-groups (Postmes, Spears, Sakhel & De Groot, 2001; Chiu & Cheng, 2014).

Furthermore, a myriad of studies reveal that groups created on common bonds and common identities may both generate strong commitments, but in different ways. For example, common bond groups may elicit higher levels of interest in the individual group members and in within-group communi-cations while common identity groups may treat individual group members as relatively interchangeable. At this point, the preservation of homogeneity stands for an imperative in order to maintain unity in these groups (Farzan, et al., 2011). Despite the existence of many similarities, social psychological research frequently deems that these two types of groups cannot be combined with each other. It is assumed that overestimating the presence of individuals may afflict the common identity and overestimating the presence of the group as a whole may afflict common bonds (Turner, 1991; Postmes, Spears & Lea, 1998; Sassenberg, 2002).

In order to investigate the difference between common identity and common bond feelings, Prentice et al. (1994) conducted a study in university clubs. Hereby, they discussed about two group categories - topic-based groups (e.g., the school newspaper, art groups, sports teams) as common identity groups, and relation-based groups (e.g., fraternities, residential units, and eating clubs) as common bond groups. As the results proved, individuals of the com-mon identity groups were more attached to their group as an entity than to their fellow group members, while individuals of the common bond groups were attached to the group as a whole and to group members at the same time.

The authors concluded that "the two perspectives might ... be viewed as de-scribing two separable processes in the development and maintenance of groups, either of which might dominate under a given set of circumstanc-es" (Prentice et al., 1994, p.490). Anyway, rather than giving salience to the existence of cardinal different group types, this classification points out to distinct attachment processes within groups. In what group development is concerned, groups which arise on the basis of common identity may as well

develop networks of interpersonal bonds, just as interpersonal networks may also develop a shared group identity.

Focusing also on a dichotomous approach, Brewer and Gardner distinguished between "the collective self (corresponding to perceiving the self in terms of group membership) and the relational self, where the latter corresponds to identities grounded in dyadic personal relationships and small face-to-face groups that are essentially networks of interpersonal relationships" (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p.83 cited in Lea, Spears & Watt, 2007, p.763). Also, while personal attraction is the outcome of typical ties between people and is not under the group's influential considerations in principle, group-based social attraction stands for the result of categorization of self and others in terms of the group.

The discrimination between identity-based and bond-based attachment has also been approached in the context of virtual communities (e.g. Postmes & Spears, 2000; Sassenberg & Postmes 2002; Utz & Sassenberg, 2002; Ren, Kraut & Kiesler, 2007). An insight into this matter reveals that common identity in the online settlements refers to the members' commitment to the online community's purpose or topic. In contrast, common bond in the virtual settings assumes that individuals are socially or emotionally attached to certain community fellows.

Following this direction, Ren, Kraut and Kiesler (2007) have discussed the causes and consequences of identity-based and bond-based attachment to online communities, and thus reviewed multiple research articles from the social psychological literature – "We identified the relevant literature using a snowball sampling technique. We started with three highly cited papers on common identity and bond (Postmes, and Spears 2000; Prentice et al., 1994; Sassenberg, 2002) and then used their bibliographies and the Social Science Citation Index to identify relevant research that was cited by or cited these papers, respectively" (Ren, Kraut & Kiesler, 2007, p.381). Their sample comprised 22 articles whose authors had clearly highlighted the distinctions between identity and bond attachment.

Analyzing varied prerequisites for the influence in groups based on interpersonal bonds, most researchers have demonstrated that common-bond and common-identity groups had very different dynamics: in the former type of group, influence arises from diversity of views and disagreement, whereas in the latter type of group, influence arises from coherence and consensus (Sas-

senberg & Postmes, 2002). Future research is expected to identify many other contingencies that determine whether group membership is compatible or incompatible with expressions of individuality. These aspects comprise the norms and dynamics of the group, the comparative context, the relative size of the group, and the component of individuality that is salient (Prentice et al., 1994).

Purpose and hypotheses

The purpose of the current work is to investigate the particularities of common identity-based and of common bond-based groups regarding social interaction, the participatory architecture of the group, the levels of personal and work engagement in acting like a cohesive group.

Thus, the main hypotheses tested are:
H1. Common bond-based groups have more off-topic discussions than common identity-based groups.
H2. Common bond-based groups are more indulgent with members' loafing than common identity-based groups.
H3. Common bond-based groups conform less to the group norms than common identity-based groups.
H4. Members of common bond-based groups prove less reciprocity to one another than members of common identity-based groups.
H5. Members of common bond-based groups are less open to newcomers than members of common identity-based groups.
H6. Members of common bond-based feel less at ease with member turnover than members of common identity-based groups.

Materials and methods
Participants

Seventeen project coordinators from Romanian medium size ecology NGOs participated to the study. The selection of project coordinators from NGOs as participants to the study was determined by two main reasons: (1) to test the hypotheses within groups that are not financially motivated and (2) to conduct the interviews with team leaders who have closely and consistently been observing the dynamics and configuration of the coordinated groups.

The participants were selected using a snowball sampling. Also, the participants were chosen taking into account their seniority within the organization. Two main criteria of selection were followed: (1) respondents should have occupied this position for at least two years and (2) the respondents should have coordinated at least three project teams of 15 up to 25 members concerning public information, awareness or education campaigns. The sample comprised individuals aged between 28 and 40, eight of them being females.

Procedure

In order to generate detailed and in-depth descriptions of the participants' experiences we chose to use phenomenological interviews. The interviewees' observations, perceptions and understandings were investigated by employing a semi-structured in-depth interview based on open-ended questions. This option catalyzed the opportunity to discuss some topics in a more detailed manner and the descriptions were further explored through 'probes'. We considered individual interviews more valuable to provide detailed information about the meaning of the situations and of the social contexts to each participant in the setting. In line with this objective, we resorted to face-to-face interviews as the best way of collecting high quality data and of granting a greater degree of flexibility.

The interviews took place at the project coordinators' offices and were conducted during April 2013. Questions were posed in a relaxed informal manner so that the interview appeared more like a discussion or conversation. The project coordinators were explained the purpose of the interview and were encouraged to co-operate. Still, they were not given too much detail that would have biased their responses. During the interview, both the interviewer and the interviewees were given the possibility to clarify questions, correct misunderstandings, offer prompts, probe responses, follow up on new ideas and on any comments meant to add something to the understanding of the setting. The objective was to uncover the widest range of meanings held by the participants in the setting. The respondents were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity in the aggregated findings.

The structure of the interview followed Seidman (1998) the three-phase qualitative interview: focused life history (the respondents' experiences were put in context, by asking them to provide as much information as possible about themselves, in relation to the topic of the study); the details of experience (concrete details of their present experience in the research topic area); reflec-

tion on the meaning (reflection on the meaning of their experience, how they make intellectual and emotional connections with the experiences that are the subject of the research topic).

The answers to the interviews were categorized by carrying out a thematic analysis as a systematic way of identifying all the main concepts which arose in the interviews, and of developing them into common themes. Some of the responses were illustrated using the social network analysis which provides a visual support for the investigated group structure in terms of actors and sub-groups (nodes and clusters) and ties between actors (connections) (D'Andrea, Ferri & Grifoni, 2010).

Measures

The analysis was focused on members' topic discussion, on their attitude towards loafing, conformation to group norms, reciprocity, attitude towards newcomers, reference to member turnover and their commitment to provide pertinent solutions and resolves to the project team's issues. Additionally, the participants were asked about other relevant aspects regarding their overall experience within their organization in order to assure a relaxed setting for the interview and to contextualize their descriptions following the research purpose and hypotheses.

Results

As we have already mentioned the participants to the interview have been in a project coordinator position for at least two years, most of them performing this function for three and four years. During this time, they carried out myriad projects by coordinating medium size groups in the NGO (15 to 25 members). The projects were mainly developed locally so the interaction between the team members relied on direct and frequent contacts.

The duration of the projects was between three weeks and four months, depending on their nature and their scope was merely social and ecological – public information, awareness or education campaigns related to environmental issues. The group members were generally high school teenagers.

According to the statements of all the participants in the study, groups were formed either of individuals who admired and identified with the mission of the project team (developing an identity-based attachment), or of individuals

who were close to the persons already present in the team or went together with their fellows (developing bond-based attachment). As the answers reveal, the latter category of membership was more often encountered because high school adolescents tend to get involved in such projects especially when their friends have similar attitudes to these initiatives. Still, every project coordinator gave at least two examples of groups which were almost entirely created driven by the campaign's goals, mission, impact etc.

These things considered, the first set of questions addressed the configuration of the group topic discussion and regarded the first hypothesis: H1. Common bond-based groups have more off-topic discussions than common identity-based groups.

At this point, the participants' responses show that in common identity-based groups, members focus on the project topic, they are interested in analysing the cardinal aspects of the debated theme and they enjoy any comments on the issue in question. Conversely, members of common bond-based groups are prone to off-topic discussions regarding additional problems which are not connected at all with the team's interests. Individuals seem to be distracted by any other topic related to their personal lives and experiences and they give way to their feelings, thoughts and opinions.

For instance, according to Marian, one of the project coordinators who participated to the study, "*the topics of discussion tend to vary dramatically and cover unlimited subjects in the groups formed of people who have well known each other for a long time. Almost always, they seem to be in their own world telling jokes and stories, mocking one another, as if the teams were created to provide them with a meeting place. I was constantly forced to remind them why we were there and what we should focus on. It was quite time-consuming and I often had to guide their attention to the main problems in review*".

On the contrary, speaking about the groups formed of people who have hardly interacted before the project, Eva highlighted that "*group discussions tend to be related to the group theme and cover typical areas. Despite their age, adolescents are very responsible and careful when it comes to generate effective campaigns which are very much treated as their own kids. They are extremely attentive to all the factors which may trigger the success of the project and they tend to discuss all day long about the best ways to achieve the project goals. Sometimes, they even forget that they are still children*".

Nevertheless, the description provided by Remus underlined an interesting exception. He reported that two years ago he had to plan a campaign in a very short period of time and the first members who volunteered were very close friends, too. Still, this was by far the most focused project team he has ever coordinated – *"I was in no time for gathering people with greater experience and I had to resort to the ones at my disposal. I was quite sceptical about their performance because I had previously worked with them and they seemed to be distracted and careless. In a mysterious way, this time they deeply understood the situation, letting outside all the off-topic discussions and preoccupations. They appeared to be totally concentrated on the tasks and did their best."*

This statement proves that the differences between the common identity groups and common bond groups should be approached within a larger framework, as time pressure, the task importance or the project dimension may become crucial variables in understanding the group's functionality.

The second unit of questions addressed the individuals' attitude towards members' loafing and pointed out to the second hypothesis: H2. Common bond-based groups are more indulgent with members' loafing than common identity-based groups.

At this level, the project coordinators questioned were quite categorical in what concerns the group members' reference to this matter. From Ciprian's standpoint, *"when groups are formed by people who are very much interested in the project effectiveness, members' loafing is almost forbidden. The rest of the group is harsh on people who do not maintain their concentration on the tasks and try to balk from what they have to do. There were numerous cases when members were banned from the group because of their loafing".* Consistent with this approach, Magda noted that *"in responsible groups, loafing is the most disturbing way to deal with things"* and Marian stressed out that *"when teams are involved for the project sake, there are few situations when a member is willing to stand apart".*

On the contrary, in common bond-based groups, the work climate appears to be more relaxed as the group members prove to be very tolerant with the others' loafing. Moreover, they are tempted to follow their distracted fellows and sometimes they may even jeopardise the project. In George's opinion, *"when friends come together to work for a public campaign, they often understand each other if one of them is loafing and the tendency is that the others join him or her".* Eva added an interesting point, mentioning that *"even this kind of groups have*

acknowledged the fact that their friends' detached attitude towards the project tasks required compensation from their part".

To sum up, the common identity groups seem to have little tolerance for others' loafing while common bond groups are frequently quite permissive. Still, when the others' loafing implies compensation from their part, things change and the more hardworking colleagues take action. Working in the others' place is not tolerated for ever, no matter how close the interpersonal relationships are.

The third set of questions was intended to test the members' conformity to the group norms and to answer to the third hypothesis of the study: H3. Common bond-based groups conform less to the group norms than common identity-based groups. In this sense, we could determine two categories of responses. The first one comprised twelve interviewees who pointed out clear differences between the two types of groups while the second one included five interviewees who stated that there are not diametrical distinctions between common identity and common bond groups. As an example for the first category, Vlad highlighted the fact that "*members who are not tied in other contexts rather than the ones provided by the NGO's projects have a pro-social behaviour in accordance with the social norms of the group, but in the situation when bond-based attachment leads the team its members show lower conformity to group norms. They are willing to do their part within the project, but following their own rhythm and personal rules*".

Furthermore, Doru added that "*in groups created of people who do not know one another very well, interpersonal relations between members seem to be less important. To feel connected to this group, it is not relevant to closely know the other members personally. Nevertheless, it is of great importance for the group members to see that they all share the interest, goal or vision of the group that they comply with the same collective norms. This is their driving force, their courage and their success*". In line with this perspective, Marian briefly concluded - "*when the subgroups have previously sprung off in daily interactions, they have settled their own rules and when joining the big team they preserved their norms and attitudes and rarely evolved towards the group as a whole. It took me plenty of time and many endeavours of catalysing consistent mutual exposure for the new group as an entity to emerge*".

The fourth set of questions was directed to the investigation of the group members' reciprocity and uncovered two different patterns: generalized reci-

procity which characterizes common identity-based groups versus direct reciprocity which characterizes common bond-based groups. Thus, reciprocity in the common identity groups does not take into account interpersonal relationships founded on other considerations rather than the project ones while reciprocity in the common bond groups follows the logics of the personal ties between the subgroup members. At this level, Marian observed that "*in the already formed groups, there are few cases in which the subgroup members were interested in the others. For example, once we had to deal with a time-consuming project which kept us together for nine hours in a row. When the lunch break came, one of the subgroup members asked his fellows if they wanted him to buy anything from the nearby fast-food. He did not concern about the others whatsoever. This thing happened too while I was coordinating a newly formed group of teenagers from different high schools. After two days of interaction, when the lunch break came, three of the kids who were going to the same fast-food asked all their peers in the office whether they wanted anything to eat*".

However, as Magda mentioned "*there is a good chance that in time, if a project lasts for at least one month and the encounters are several times a week, new fragile relations may emerge between the members of the subgroups due to sharing the same basic purpose or achieving together good results*".

In order to better visualise the configuration of reciprocity in common identity and in common bond groups, we resorted to the social network analysis which shows the difference between the groups through figurative graphs. The graphs were created to illustrate Magda's description of the two-typed groups that she has been coordinating as a NGO project coordinator.
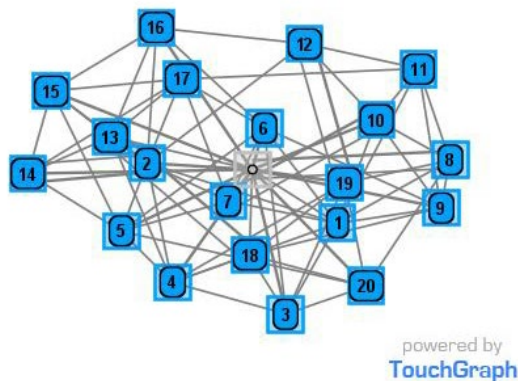

Figure 1. The reciprocity pattern of common identity-based groups

The graph reveals that in common identity groups there is a pattern of gen-
eralised reciprocity (there are connections between all the group members).
Members are very much interchangeable (they all have the same colour) as the
effectiveness of a project relies on responsibility, perseverance and attachment
to the group as a whole and not on the personal relationships established on
other grounds. The project coordinator assumes a central position, directing
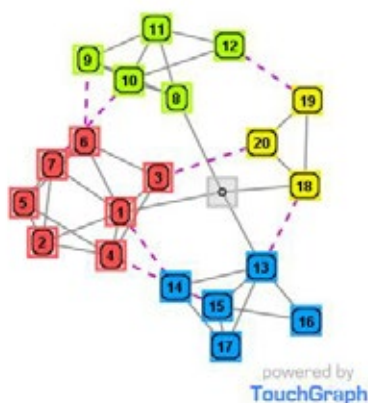all the forces towards a common goal – the success of the project.

Figure 2. The reciprocity pattern of common bond-based groups

Conversely, the second graph lays emphasis on the fact that in the bond-based
condition, in which subgroup association and recurrent exposure have al-
ready taken place in other settlements, the reciprocity pattern shows direct
ties to individual subgroup members (the grey solid connections) and scarce-
ly to other subgroup members (the purple dashed connections). Also, the
subgroups / clusters can be distinguished through different colours and the
group's configuration shows less cohesion than in common identity groups.
As previously mentioned, the group structure may change in time if the proj-
ect team has the chance to develop a common sense for its success.

The fifth unit of questions addressed the members' attitude towards newcom-
ers and aimed at providing an answer for the study hypothesis - H5. Members
of common bond-based groups are less open to newcomers than members
of common identity-based groups. The subjects' statements emphasize that
groups founded on individual relationships between their members are not
very tolerant with newcomers and it is quite hard for new individuals to join
and integrate with members that already have strong interpersonal relation-
ships. At this level, Andreea reported that "*one of the main challenges is to*

preserve cohesion when newcomers enter the group, especially when the group consists of strong subgroups. New members feel even ostracized and sometimes leave and never come back". Similarly, Ciprian believes that "*when groups are formed of friends who enjoy being together in a project, newcomers are seen as intruders liable to shake their equilibrium. They are not keen on involving them in task solving or performing, they tend to isolate new faces by limiting any kind of interaction or communication".*

With respect to newcomers, common identity groups are open to any support for the project sake. They welcome newcomers and they are interested in integrating them as soon as possible in order to focus together on the main issues which should be dealt with. For instance, Marian elaborates on this matter, underlining the fact that "*when project teams are created of people who have not developed strong ties between them, newcomers are easily integrated in the group structure as they are perceived as reliable candidates for the success of the project. They promptly inform newcomers about the tasks and activities in progress and they encourage them to take action as soon as possible".*

At this point, Vlad and Elena deem that there are groups with strong interpersonal relations who are open to newcomers, especially when they have difficulties in dealing with certain aspects of the project. Hereby, newcomers are perceived as human resources able to provide support for achieving the project goals through cooperation and shared efforts.

The last set of question regarded the group members' attitudes towards member turnover. The responses of the participants highlighted the fact that common bond groups are very sensitive to this situation while common identity groups prove robustness to member shifts. Eva explained that "*when some of your friends decide to leave the team, the others feel left alone and loose their comfort within the group. Only when the project is important for them is there a counter force driving them back towards the rest of the group. If this is not the case, there are huge chances that they leave too".* On the contrary, in common identity-based groups the project effectiveness and the goals fulfilment are prevalent as Doru pointed out: "*there were many situations in which members had left the team before the project finished due to different factors (school engagements, parents' interventions, fatigue etc). This happened mainly during the long-period projects. The other members accepted the situation naturally and they were more determined to fill the empty places through hard work and commitment".*

To sum up, common bond groups are vulnerable to turnover, since the departure of someone's friends may determine his own departure. Conversely, common identity groups are more robust to departures as their cohesion relies on the group's purpose, mission and tasks.

Discussion and conclusions

As the results show, common bond-based groups have more off-topic discussion than the common identity-based groups which validates the first hypothesis of the study. However, the respondents brought to light situations when this scenario is no longer unwavering as time pressure, task importance or project dimension may exert a considerable influence on the group dynamics and on its distinct characteristics.

In what concerns the tolerance of the group members towards others' loafing, common bond-based groups proved to be more indulgent with this attitude than common identity-based groups. Hereby, the second hypothesis is validated, but as the participants in the study mentioned, there are situations in which members of common bond groups assume the responsibilities given by the project coordinator and are aware of the fact that their fellows' loafing means their additional effort for finishing the job.

The test of the third hypothesis validated the fact that common bond-based groups conform less to the group norms than common identity-based groups. The former category has its pre-established norms and attitudes towards their reference group and it may take long periods of time for the group to develop interpersonal ties between most of its members. Still, time and the coordinator's intervention or moderation may become crucial factors in remodelling the subgroup structures and functionality and in reconfiguring a group as a whole.

A similar situation appears in the case of the fourth hypothesis which is mainly validated by the interviewees' responses. Members of common bond-based groups prove less reciprocity to one another than members of common identity-based groups, with the amendment that time and repeated exposures may play a key role in the emergence of homogeneous groups. People's attachment to individual group members is liable to develop towards people's attachment to the group as a whole, subsequent attachment happening via different routes (through mutual exposure, through frequent communication and interaction, through the observation of similarities, through managerial

moderation, through working together, through the achievement of common goals etc).

The subjects' statements regarding the group members' attitudes towards newcomers reiterates the differences between common bond and common identity groups as members of common bond-based groups are less open to newcomers than members of common identity-based groups. Still, as some of the project coordinators mentioned, when the common bond groups are pressured by time or reach a dead end in dealing with the project tasks, newcomers are seen as rescuers and are more than welcomed.

A similar perspective is offered by the test of the sixth hypothesis which is also validated - Members of common bond-based feel less at ease with member turnover than members of common identity-based groups. Almost always, your friend departure from the group triggers your own departure because you do not feel comfortable with the other subgroups within the larger team. On the contrary, when the group is focused not on interpersonal connections but on the success of the project, members' shifts are not able to afflict dramatically the rest of the group as it has to follow its mission. At this point, according to the participants' responses, even in common bond groups, there is a chance to stay beside the other members if the project itself stands for a personal challenge.

All in all, the six hypotheses of the study were validated, but the answers provided by the questioned project coordinators brought to light several variables which should be taken into account by future research. Firstly, the common bond and common identity groups are both prescriptive, helping NGO project coordinators to make managerial and team choices liable to contribute to the success of their projects, and predictive, helping them to understand and exploit the group's logics and dynamics. Secondly, additional factors may directly influence the group's distinct patterns and result in different kinds of attachment and group outcomes. As shown before, time pressure, the group mission viewed as a personal challenge, the identification with the project goals may alter the expected practices and patterns of the group and lead to different levels and forms of group participation and commitment. Thirdly, in real life, groups seem to be created from a mix of identity and bond-based attachment, although they tend to lean more towards one side or the other. Nevertheless, it may be more fruitful to think of identity and bond as two dimensions of members' attachment to groups and not as two parallel ways of the group creation and evolution.

References

Back, K.W. (1951). Influence through social communication. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,* 46, 9–23.

Berscheid, E., and Reis, H.T. (1998). Attraction and close relationships. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.). *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp.193–281), vol. 2. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chiu, C.-M., & Cheng, H.-L. (2014). Driving Individuals' Subjective Well-being in Virtual Communities through Interpersonal and Impersonal Mechanisms. Retrieved from http://pacis2014.org/data/PACIS_mainconference/pdf/pacis2014_submission_189.pdf.

D'Andrea, A., Ferri, F., and Grifoni, P. (2010). An Overview of Methods for Virtual Social Networks Analysis. In A. Abraham, A. Hassanien and V. Snasel (Eds.). *Computational Social Network Analysis Trends, Tools and Research Advances* (pp.1-26). London: Springer-Verlag London Limited.

Farzan, R., Dabbish, L., Kraut, R., and Postmes, T. (2011). *Increasing Commitment to Online Communities by Designing for Social Presence* (pp. 321-330). In *CSCW '11 Proceedings of the ACM 2011 conference on Computer supported cooperative work*. New York.

Grabowicz, P.A., Aiello, L.A., Eguíluz, V.M., and Jaimes, A. (2013). Distinguishing Topical and Social Groups Based on Common Identity and Bond Theory. *WSDM'13*, February 4–8, Rome, Italy.

Lea, M., Spears, R., and Watt, S. (2007). Visibility and anonymity effects on attraction and group cohesiveness. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 761–773.

Postmes, T., Spears, R., and Lea, M. (1998). Breaching or building social boundaries? Side-effects of computer-mediated communication. *Communication Research,* 25, 689–715.

Postmes, T., and Spears, R. (2000). Refining the cognitive redefinition of the group: Deindividuation effects in common bond *vs.* Common identity

groups. In T. Postmes, R. Spears, M. Lea & S. Reicher (Eds.). *Side effects centre stage: Recent developments in studies of deindividuation in groups* (pp.63–78). Amsterdam: KNAW.

Postmes, T., Spears, R., Sakhel, K., and De Groot, D. (2001). Social influence in computer-mediated communication: The effects of anonymity on group behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 27, 1243–1254.

Prentice, D.A., Miller, D.T., and Lightdale, J.R. (1994). Asymmetries in attachments to groups and to their members: Distinguishing between common-identity and common-bond groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 20(5), 484–493.

Ren, Y., Kraut, R., and Kiesler, S. (2007). Applying common identity and bond theory to design of online communities. *Organization Studies,* 28(3), 377–408.

Sassenberg, K. (2002). Common bond and common identity groups on the internet: Attachment and normative behavior in on-topic and off-topic chats. *Group Dynamics: Theory and Practice,* 6(1), 27–37.

Sassenberg, K., and Postmes, T. (2002). Cognitive and strategic processes in small groups: Effects of anonymity of the self and anonymity of the group on social influence. *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 41, 463–480.

Tausczik, Y.R., Dabbish, L.A., & Kraut, R.E. (2014). Building Loyalty to Online Communities Through Bond and Identity-based Attachment to Subgroups. CSCW 2014 Building Communities and Relationships, February 15-19, 2014, Baltimore, MD, USA, 146-157.

Turner, J.C. (1985). Social categorization and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behavior. In E.J. Lawler (Ed.). *Advances in group processes: Theory and research*, Vol. 2. (pp.77–122). Greenwich: JAI Press.

Turner, J.C. (1991). *Social influence*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press

Utz, S., and Sassenberg, K. (2002). Distributive justice in common-bond and common-identity groups. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations,* 5(2), 151–162.