

Dynamics of Moral Disengagement on Children in Conflict With the Law

by Dessi Christanti

Submission date: 06-Nov-2022 10:45PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1945908222

File name: 6p-Dynamics_of_moral.pdf (23.16M)

Word count: 3628

Character count: 21133



Dynamics of Moral Disengagement on Children in Conflict With the Law

Dessi Christanti

Widya Mandala Catholic University
christarigas@gmail.com

Abstract

Criminal behavior that has been done by children in conflict with the law can be analyzed from moral angles. Children in conflict with the law had been studying the moral from the environment. That moral should serve as a code of conduct. But once, they were faced the situations that forced them to against their own moral standards and society standards. At that time, children in conflict with the law could justify their reasons that justification allowed them committed the offense. Bandura called this mechanism as moral disengagement. The aim of this study is going to know the dynamics of the process of moral disengagement when children in conflict with the law do criminal behavior. This study will use qualitative research design, specially instrumenal case studies. Research participants are children in conflict with the law particularly male, who are aged between 14 years old and 18 years old, has been found guilty by the court. Methods of data collection are using interview. Data will be analyzed using thematic analysis.

Keywords: Dynamic, Moral Disengagement, Children in Conflict with the Law

Introduction

Violation of the law is not only done by adults, but also children and adolescents. The number of children and adolescents who break the law in Indonesia based on data from ditjenpas in April 2015 are 2,720 inmates children consisting of 42 girls and 2,688 boys (www.ditjenpas.go.id). Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) noted that the type of violation committed by children ranging from theft to murder. Theft cases for example is the case of theft of flip-flops made by AAL aged 15 years (<http://www.kpai.go.id/artikel/implementasi-restorasi-justice-dalam-penanganan-anak-bermasalah-dengan-hukum/>). While in Casauk, Tangerang, there are two children who become specialists motorcycle thieves. A child who is 12 years old involved in the robbery of a house in the area of South Tangerang.

Several children involved in the child abuse cases to murder. For example, the case of 10-year-old SY persecute his friend named Renggo who are also 10 years old until death. Whereas in eastern Jakarta, three teenagers aged 14 -16 years killed another teenager by slitting his throat. The reason for the murder was simpel, the actors felt hurt because was abused by the victim. (<http://www.kpai.go.id/berita/kpai-anak-terlibat-kriminalitas-karena-terinspirasi-lingkungan-tak-ramah-anak/>).

Law of juvenile criminal justice system no. 11 year 2012 article 1 no. 3 states:

Children in conflict with the law, hereinafter referred to as child is a child aged twelve (12) years and under 18 (eighteen) years who allegedly committed the crime.

Based on that law, children and adolescents who are suspected of criminal offenses, as the case put forward by KPAI called children in conflict with the law.



Criminal behavior that has been done by **children in conflict with the law** can be analyzed from various viewpoints. What kind of factors cause children to **commit** such acts. The problem of children in conflict with the law can be analyzed in terms of morale. **The word moral comes from the Latin "mos"** and the plural is "mores", which means customs. Indonesian Dictionary (1989) defines moral as a sense morals, manners or decency. A sociologist named Smith (in Hitlin 2008) describes the moral as the orientation of the understanding of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad, valuable and worthless, fair and unfair is the standard for evaluating desires, decisions and individual choice. Thus, morality can be said as a matter of life of individuals in the act

Moral approach in analyzing unlawful behavior can use the theory of moral reasoning by Kohlberg (1995). Moral reasoning can be explained that possess a central role in decisions that involve moral. Some researchs showed that moral reasoning is indeed negatively correlated with misconduct for example delinquency (Wan, 2012; Velden Brugman, Booms, Koo, 2010). Moral reasoning was also different between **children in conflict with the law** of male sex and **children in conflict with the law** are female. For example **in the** case of murder, **the** boy justify their behavior by claiming that it is fair to kill people who make mistakes or hurt their ego. While in girls, the reasons given are victims are criminals who will continue to commit crimes on others (Gomez, 2013). But then the moral reasoning described by Bandura back through self-regulatory mechanisms and moral disengagement (Bandura, A.; Barbaranelli, C.; Caprara, GV; & Pastorelli, C, 1996).

Individuals have the **moral in** itself through interaction with the environment and through education in schools. In the theory of ecological systems, Bronfenbrenner (1979) says that the development of the individual is the result of interaction with the environment. Individuals are surrounded by a variety of environments. As Russian dolls, the environment can be described as a structure consisting of several layers. Starting from the outermost layer, which is the most extensive public environment or the so-called macro system, then the environment exo system, meso system environment to a nearby neighborhood with individuals such as family called micro system. The fourth type of environment that interact and ultimately affect the individual. Individuals learn the moral of the four types of the environment. For example, individuals learn the values of honesty is a good thing can be started from a family which is a micro-system environment. But apart from the family, individuals also know that in his neighborhood (meso system and exo system) are also teaching that honesty was something worthwhile. In macro system, customs and religious teachings also stressed honesty in behavior. In fact, state law states if someone does dishonesty, such corruption would be punished. Thus the individual will understand that honesty is important and dishonest acts can be sanctioned.

Various individual moral is absorbed from the environment into the individual's moral standard that serves as a code of conduct. Individual also develop internal sanctions if he violates the moral standards. Individuals who adhered to the norms will avoid behavior that violates norms for fear of internal and external sanctions (Bandura, 1990.1999). But sometimes individual is dealing with situations that allow him to acts contrary to their own moral standards and moral society. At that time of the act conflicting moral, individual rationalizing so that they can commit the offense. This mechanism is called the moral disengagement (Bandura, 1990.1999).

Moral disengagement can be defined as the process of cognition that involves rationalization and justification when individuals perform acts that deviate from the moral or ethical. Moral disengagement can be said is restructuring cognitive deviant behavior. (Bandura, 1989) .Moral disengagement make individuals perform self-serving behavior that is contrary to the moral principles while individuals do not feel negative emotions such as guilt, or shame. So it can be said that through moral disengagement individuals to receive justification for doing something that does not have feelings of guilt or shame. **Previous research shows that moral disengagement is** negatively correlated **with feelings of guilt** (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli 1996).

Basically every individual has the moral standard in her obtained through the internalization of the environment. This moral standards that guide the behavior of individuals. Individuals then develop self-regulatory in him. Through self-regulatory monitor individual behavior and the condition when



the behavior occurs, then the individual judging the behavior based on moral standards and the situation, the last set of behavior based on the consequences that accompany it. Individuals will adjust their behavior based on the sanctions that apply to themselves according to their own moral standards. But this moral standard will not function as a regulator of behavior until activated by individuals. Selective activation of moral standard can also be followed by moral sanctions neglect by individuals when individuals faced with a situation where individuals have violated the law (Bandura, 1990, 1999, 2002

Moral setting within the individual is actually not only intrapsychic process. Individuals will not be run automatically without involving moral factor of social reality. However moral behavior is the product of a relationship. Reciprocal between cognitive, affective and social influence (Bandura, 2002). In the study of moral, in addition to the cognitive aspect also studied aspects of affective / emotional associated with morals. Moral emotion can be said to play an important role in the moral apparatus, affect the relationship between moral standards and moral behavior (Tangney, Stuewig, Mashek, 2007). Moral disengagement will lower feelings of guilt in the individual so that the individual easily conduct contrary to moral behavior (Bandura, A. ; Barbaranelli, C. ; Caprara, GV; & Pastorelli, C, 1996).

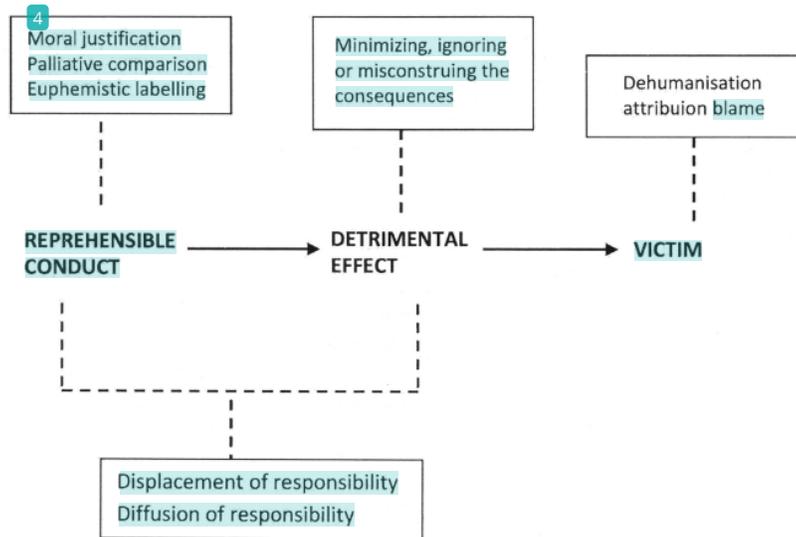


Figure 1: Moral Disengagement Mechanism

Figure 1 shows that in general moral disengagement can be done when people see that his action is a despicable act, the effect of his action is bad and there is victims. That three aspect is developed eight ways of moral disengagement:

1. Moral justification
Moral disengagement may center on the moral justification for moral violations by individuals. So it can be said individuals do rasionalisation or looking for reasons that could justify his actions.
2. Palliative comparison/advantegous comparison
An act can be assessed based on a comparison with other works. Through this comparison, individuals can justify his actions because what he did is considered more valuable, more menguntngkan or lighter than other acts of moral offense.



3. Euphemistic labeling
Language can be used to refine the act of violation committed by individuals. Euphemism has been used extensively to shape the perception of other people so cruel act which actually no longer sounded cruel. For example, people will perceive the individual is more cruel when reading the sentence "X has done persecution" than reading the phrase "X aggression"
4. Displacement of responsibility
Individuals will be easier to perform acts that violate the law when they see such behavior on the orders of others. Thus the individual does not have to be responsible for the consequences of his actions.
5. Diffusion of responsibility
The role of the moral control may be weak if people feel terdapat vagueness of responsibility for unlawful acts.
6. Disregard or Distortion of Consequences
Another way to weaken the role of moral control so that individuals can easily do immoral action is to ignore or minimize the consequence of his actions.
7. Dehumanization
The way individuals perceive and appreciate others help determine whether an individual is able to commit inhumane acts or unlawful.
8. Attribution of blame
Blaming others (victims) and the environment is one of the events that are usually used when individuals perform acts that violate the law or morals.

Some research suggests that moral disengagement is one of the acts that violate the norms or rules. Moral disengagement has a direct correlation with aggressive behavior and correlates directly with juvenile delinquency (Bandura,; Barbaranelli,; Caprara,; & Pastorelli, 1996). Moral disengagement is also correlated with the onset of criminal index. Moral disengagement is high then the younger individu dealing with police and violation of law (DeLisi, Peters, Dansby, Vaughn, Shook & Hochstetler, (2013). Research conducted by Kiriakidis, (2008) showed that children in conflict with the law has a moral disengagement higher than school children. the results of the study De Caroli, and Sagone, (2014) showed that boys adopt more moral disengagement than girls. it means that boys have a moral disengagement, which is higher than girls . Based on the results of the previous studies, the current research is setting the boys in conflict with the law.

Moral disengagement theory has been used extensively to understand why an individual can perform unlawful acts that harm others. Individual tends to make moral disengagement when he would do something wrong (Shu, LL; Gino, F, Bazerman, MH; 2011). Several studies had also proved that moral disengagement positively correlated with acts that violate moral (Bandura, A.; Barbaranelli, C.; Caprara, GV; & Pastorelli, C.; 1996), positively correlated with bullying (Caravita, S.SC. Sijtsema, JJ, Rambaran. AJ, Gini, G.; 2014), and positively correlated with the tendency of individuals to fight (Stevens, D, L., Hardy, SA; 2011). One type of moral disengagement, dehumanization played as a moderator variable between gang involvement in violent behavior (Alleyne, E., Fernandes, I., Pritchard, E.; 2014).

Moral disengagement is influenced by various factors both internal, external and demographics. Internal factors related to moral disengagement, including the ability to problem solving is negatively correlated with moral disengagement (Coker, KL; Ikpe, UN; Brooks, JS; Page, B.; Sobel, MB; 2014). Empathy also has a negative correlation with moral disengagement (Bandura,; Barbaranelli,; Caprara,; & Pastorelli, 1996). Demographic factors through some research also correlated with moral disengagement. One of these is gender, men tend to have a higher moral disengagement than women (Cardwell, BC, Piquero, AR, Jennings, WG, Copes, H., Schubert, CA, Mulvey, EP (2015). The influence of environmental factors shown through research that family environment can be the cause of Moral disengagement. this refers to the results of research that family stress terbuti correlated with moral disengagement (DeLisi, Peters, Dansby, Vaughn, Shook & Hochstetler, (2013).



Environmental factors were found to be antecedent to moral disengagement. In social cognition theory Bandura (1999) it is stated that the behavior of individuals both pro and anti-social social is reciprocal relationship between behavior, cognition and personal, and the environment. The statement in line with the theory of the ecological system, of Brofenbrenner (1979). Thus the macro environment system, exo system, meso system and micro systems influence whether people do or do not moral disengagement. According to (Dhingra .; Debowski,.; Sarah Hyland .; .; & Lola Palmer;. (2015) if violence is something that is common in the environment, then the children will learn to (a) use force to resolve the problem, for the defense themselves, to achieve the goal, not the things that violate moral standards, (b) to expect something positive use of violence is not immoral. Based on this research, individual adolescents will have moral disengagement are high when friends with individuals who have a moral disengagement high (Caravita, S.SC, Sijtsema, JJ, Rambaran. AJ, Gini, G .; 2014).

Under such exposure, it can be concluded that moral disengagement is the process of breaking the moral when individual faced the moral conflicts situations. This process of moral disengagement makes people suppress their feelings of guilt so making it easier for individuals to commit moral offense. Moral disengagement is influenced by external factors individuals. The conceptual framework proposed in this study are as follows:

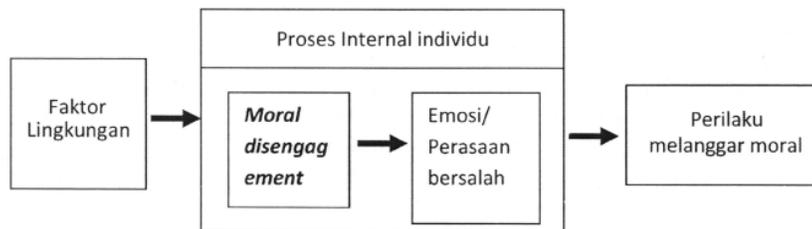


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the research

The general objective of this study was to determine the dynamics of the process of moral disengagement when children in conflict with the law do criminal behavior. In particular the research objectives can be broken down into:

1. determine the condition of a child's cognitive conflict with the law when confronted with a situation that allows them unlawful
2. determine the condition of the affection of children in conflict with the law when confronted with a situation that allows them breaking the law
3. know the kind of moral disengagement, which selected children in conflict the law
4. determine the role of social environment in the process of moral disengagement

Methods

This study will use qualitative research designs instrumental case study. Expected results of this case study can be used to analyze other similar cases and enrich the moral disengagement theory. The phenomenon of this study is Moral disengagement of children in conflict with the law which is defined as the process of cognition of children in conflict with the law when individuals perform acts that deviate from the moral or ethical.

Participants of this research are children in conflict with the law with the following conditions:

1. In accordance with Law of juvenile criminal justice system. 11 year 2012 article 1 no. 2 and Article 69 paragraph (2) the limit of the age of participants was 14 years old and not yet 18 years old.
2. It has been found guilty by the courts
3. Male, it is based on research results that men have moral disengagement higher than women

Data collection will be using interview techniques. Data analysis method use thematic analysis.



Conclusion

Moral disengagement has been used extensively to understand why people break the rules or morals. Moral disengagement research on children in conflict with the law have also been carried out. Results of previous studies show that moral disengagement on children in conflict with the law due to internal and external factors.

Reference

- Alleyne, E., Fernandes, I., Pritchard, E.; 2014. Denying Humanness to victims: How gang members justify violent behavior. *Group Process & Intergroup Relations* vol 17(6) 750-762 DOI: 10.1177/1368430214536064
- Bandura, A. Selective Activation and Disengagement of Moral Control. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 46 No. 1, 1990, pp. 27-46
- Bandura, A.; Barbaranelli, C.; Caprara, G.V.; & Pastorelli, C. 1996. Mechanism of moral disengagement in the exercise of moral agency. *Journal of personality and social psychology* vol 71 no. 2, 364-374
- Bandura, A. 1999. Moral Disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*. (Special Issues on evil and violence), 3, 193-209.
- Bandura, A. 2002. Selective moral disengagement in the exercise of moral agency. ISSN 0305-7240 print; ISSN 1465-3877 online/02/020101-190 2002 *Journal of Moral Education* vol, 31 no. 2 DOI: 10.1080/0305724022014322
- Bandura, A. 2002. Social Cognitive Theory. Dalam R.Vasta (Ed). *Annals of Child Development*. Vol.6. Six theories of child development. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press
- Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979. *The Ecology of Human Development: By Nature and Design*. USA: Harvard University Press.
- Caravita, S.S.C, Sijtsema, J.J., Rambaran, A.J., Gini, G.; 2014. Peer Influences on Moral Disengagement in late child and early adulthood. *Journal Youth Adolescence* (2014) 43:193-207 DOI 10.1007/s10964-013-9953-1
- Cardwell, S.M., Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Copes, H., Schubert, C.A., Mulvey, E.P. 2015. Variability in Moral Disengagement and its relationship to offending in a sample of serious youthful offender. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 2015, Vol. XX, No. X, Month 2015, 121. Doi: 10.1177/0093854814567472
- Coker, K.L.; Ikpe, U.N.; Brooks, J.S.; Page, B.; Sobel, M.B.; 2014. The Effect of Social Problem Solving Skills in the Relationship between Traumatic Stress and Moral Disengagement among Inner-City African American High School Students. *Journ Child Adol Trauma* (2014) 7:8795 DOI 10.1007/s40653-014-0012-1
- De Caroli, M.E.; Sagone, E. 2014. Mechanism of moral disengagement: An analysis from an early adolescent to youth. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 140 (2014) 312 317 doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.04.426
- DeLisi, M.; Peters, D.J.; Dansby, T.; Vaghn, M, G; Shook, J.J.; Hockstetler, A. 2014. Dynamic of Psychopathy and moral disengagement in the etiology of crime. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 2014 12: 295 DOI: 10.1177/1541204013506919
- Dhingra, K.; Debowska, A.; Sharatt, K.; Hyland, P.; Kola-Palmer, S. 2015. Psychopathy, gang membership and moral disengagement among juvenile offender. *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, 5(1), pp. 13-24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JCP-11-2014-0016>
- Gabbiadini, A.; Andrighetto, L; Volpato, C. 2012. Brief report; Does exposure to violent video games increase moral disengagement among adolescent? *Journal of adolescent* 35 (2012) 1403-1406
- Gomez, M.G.A. 2013. Moral reasoning of Filipino children in conflict with the law. *Asian Journal of management science and education* vol. 2 no. 4, october 2013
- Hitlin, S. 1989. *Moral Selves, Evil Selves: The Social Psychology of Consciences*. USA: Palgrave MacMillan
- Hyde, L.W.; Shaw, D.S.; Milannen, K.L. 2010. Developmental Precursor of Moral Disengagement and the Role of moral disengagement in the development of anti social behavior. *Journal Abnormal Children*



- Psychology (2010) 38:197-209 DOI 10.1007/s10802-009-9358-5
- _____. 1989. Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia
- Kiriakidis, S.P. 2008, Moral Disengagement Relation to Delinquency and Independence From Indices of Social Dysfunction. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* Volume 52 Number 5 October 2008 571-583 DOI 10.1177/0306624X07309063
- Kiriakidis, S.P. 2010. Young Offender's decision to re-offend as a breakdown of self regulation of hierarchically organised feedback loops: the role of Moral disengagement in formulating decision to re-offend. *Eur J Crim Policy Res* (2010) 16:237250 DOI 10.1007/s10610-010-9129-4
- Kohlberg, L. 1995. Tahap-Tahap Perkembangan Moral. Yogyakarta: Kanisius
- Shu, L.L.; Gino, F, Bazerman, M.H.; 2011. Dishonest deed, clear conscience: When Cheating leads to Moral Disengagement and motivated forgetting. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 37(3) 330-349. 2011 DOI: 10.1177/014616721398138
- Stevens, D.L., Hardy, S.A.; 2011. Individual, family and peer predictors of violence among Samoan Adolescent. *Youth & Society* 45(3) 428449. DOI: 10.1177/0044118X11424756
- Undang-undang Sistem Peradilan anak No. 11 tahun 2012
- Velden. F.V.D., Brugman, D., Boom, J., Koops, W. 2010. Moral cognitive process explaining antisocial behavior in young adolescents. *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 34(4) 291-301, DOI: 10.1177/0165025-409343-705
- Wainryb, C; Komolova, M.; Florsheim, P. 2010. How Violent Youth Offenders and Typically Developing Adolescent Construct Moral Agency in Narratives About Doing Harm. *Advancing Responsible Adolescent Development* DOI 10.1007/978-0-387-89825-4_10
- Wan, Y.T.Y. 2012. Cognitive and emtional determinan of deliquent behavior. *Discover-SS Student E Journal* Vol 1, 2012, 45-59
- www.ditjenpas.go.id diambil pada April 2015
- <http://www.kpai.go.id/artikel/implementasi-restorasi-justice-dalam-penanganan-anak-bermasalah-dengan-hukum/> diambil pada 9 Juli 2015
- <http://www.kpai.go.id/berita/kpai-anak-terlibat-kriminalitas-karena-terinspirasi-lingkungan-tak-ramah-anak> diambil pada 9 Juli 2015.

Dynamics of Moral Disengagement on Children in Conflict With the Law

ORIGINALITY REPORT

12%

SIMILARITY INDEX

10%

INTERNET SOURCES

4%

PUBLICATIONS

3%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1 journal.uad.ac.id Internet Source 7%

2 link.springer.com Internet Source 1%

3 Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper 1%

4 espace.curtin.edu.au Internet Source 1%

5 Alison Swann, Alexia Lennon, Jasmine Cleary. "Development and preliminary validation of a scale of driving moral disengagement as a tool in the exploration of driving aggression", Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour, 2017 Publication 1%

6 "Encyclopedia of Adolescence", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2018 Publication 1%

7 Submitted to Monash University

<1 %

8

Sanderson, Catherine. "Sport Psychology",
Oxford University Press

Publication

<1 %

9

CELIA MOORE. "WHY EMPLOYEES DO BAD
THINGS: MORAL DISENGAGEMENT AND
UNETHICAL ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR :
PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY", Personnel
Psychology, 03/2012

Publication

<1 %

Exclude quotes On

Exclude matches Off

Exclude bibliography On