Disengagement from Moral Disengagement: A Review of Individual Differences and Intervention Programs

Ahlaki Uzaklaşmadan Uzaklaşmak: Bireysel Farklılıklar ve Müdahale Programlarına İlişkin Bir Derleme

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ABSTRACT

It is an intriguing question of how people can reduce stress in situations where internal moral standards are violated. The moral distancing theory that addresses this question has been proposed to explain the different cognitive mechanisms facilitating people's involvement in or witnessing moral violations. Several findings showed that individual differences and contextual factors might explain moral disengagement tendencies. Beyond showing the correlations between moral disengagement processes and individual differences and contextual factors, it is also valuable to investigate if there is an effective way to intervene in moral disengagement. This review article addresses the previously shown evidence regarding individual differences, contextual factors, and interventions, which aim to enrich our understanding of the underlying psychological mechanisms to reduce unethical behaviors. Taken together, Honesty-Humility, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism were found to be individual differences associated with moral disengagement. Additionally, less research showed that attachment styles, political attitudes, moral identity, and emotions might be essential to experience moral disengagement. Although several studies showed that individual differences are related to being more prone to moral disengagement, these studies were rarely considered in intervention programs aiming to reduce immoral behaviors. Programs that have been designed to reduce moral disengagement overlook the long-term effects. Additionally, interventions often focus on the work environment and adolescence. In the future, interventions that include longitudinal designs considering the role of individual differences and different contexts might contribute to the relevant literature..
Keywords: Moral psychology, moral disengagement, individual differences, intervention studies

ÖZ

Kişilerin içsel ahlaki standartların ihlal edildiği durumlarda nasıl düşük düzeyde stres deneyimlediği merak uyandıran bir sorudur. Bu soruyu ele alan ahlaki uzaklaşma teorisi, insanların ahlaki ihlallere dahil veya tanık olmasını kolaylaştıran farklı bilişsel mekanizmaları açıklamak üzere öne sürülmüştür. İncelemeler ahlaki uzaklaşmaya ilişkin eğilimlerin bağlamsal faktörlerin yanı sıra bireysel farklılıklarla da açıklanabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Ahlaki uzaklaşmanın bireysel farklılıklar ve bağlamsal faktörlerle ilişkisinin ötesinde, ahlaki uzaklaşmaya müdahale etmenin etkili bir yolu olup olmadığını araştırmak da oldukça değerlidir. Bu derleme makalesi, bireysel farklılıklar, bağlamsal faktörler ve müdahalelerle ilgili çalışmaları ele alarak etik olmayan davranışların azaltılabilmesi için altta yatan psikolojik mekanizmalara ilişkin anlayışımızı zenginleştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Birlikte ele alındığında, bulgular Dürüstlük-Alçakgönüllülük, Uyumluluk, Sorumluluk, Psikopati ve Makyavelizm'in, ahlaki uzaklaşma ile ilişkili bireysel farklılıklar olduğunu göstermektedir. Ek olarak, daha az sayıda araştırmada bağlanma stillerinin, politik tutumların, ahlaki kimliğin ve ahlaki duyguların ahlaki uzaklaşma süreçlerini deneyimlemekle ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Çalışmalar bireysel farklılıkların ahlaki uzaklaşmaya yatkınlık için önemli olduğunu gösterse de bu farkların ahlaki uzaklaşmayı azaltmak için müdahale programlarında nadiren dikkate alındığı görülmektedir. Ahlaki uzaklaşmayı azaltmak için tasarlanan programların uzun vadeli etkilerinin nadiren test edildiği ve genellikle çalışma ortamına veya ergenlik dönemine odaklandığı görülmektedir. Gelecekte bireysel farklılıkların rolünü dikkate alan boylamsal desenleri içeren uygulamalı çalışmalar ilgili literatüre katkı sağlayacaktır.
Anahtar sözcükler: Ahlak psikolojisi, ahlaki uzaklaşma, bireysel farklılıklar, müdahale çalışmaları

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Introduction

Although humans are born with a cognitive and emotional repertoire that predisposes them to acquire and exhibit rules based on conscience, there is ample evidence of how prone they are to put moral rules on the back burner. While even newborn babies are stressed by the cries of other babies (Sagi and Hoffman 1976, Hoffman 1978), the number of people who can watch extreme examples of violence without being stressed or who do not feel uncomfortable being a part of this violence is unfortunately considerable. One of the most well-known historical examples is the testimony of Adolf Eichmann, a former Nazi officer who was put on trial in Jerusalem. Although Adolf Eichmann was part of a historical genocide, he explained his part only in terms of having done his duty. Indeed, Arendt (2010), after listening to Adolf Eichmann's testimony, argued that evil is entirely the action of "ordinary people" rather than monsters or psychopaths.

While Arendt's views on Eichmann are controversial, her view that humans - at least those who are not clinically psychopath - employ a range of mechanisms to trivialize many behaviors that might be considered contrary to moral norms has been partially supported by psychological studies. In the aftermath of the Second World War, researchers were particularly interested in understanding the psychological processes of underlying reasons for cruel behaviors (Milgram 1974, Bandura 1996, Zimbardo 2004). These studies showed that when the context is associated with obedience and violence, people become more prone to commit moral violations. In other words, even subclinical levels of psychopathic tendencies lead people to commit harmful behaviors when the context demands it. Therefore, considering the interaction of individual and contextual characteristics is vital in understanding the psychological processes underlying moral violations (Bandura 2001), as it is in understanding human behavior in general (Lewin 1935).

In the psychology literature, the situation of people being a part of or bystanders to moral violations without experiencing moral distress is addressed under the concept of "moral disengagement" (Bandura 2001). As in many morality-related issues, people's predisposition to moral disengagement is influenced by fixed variables such as personality and multidimensional interactional processes (Tsang 2002). It is important to evaluate together the individual differences and social contexts which increase the susceptibility to moral disengagement, as it will facilitate both the theoretical understanding of the psychological processes underlying moral disengagement and the intervention of moral disengagement with applied studies.

Previous research frequently examines adulthood or adolescence, focuses on the school or work environment, and examines personality factors for individual differences. In contrast, applied studies are mostly limited to school and rarely work environments. Programs aiming to prevent or intervene in moral disengagement are often carried out with student groups regarding bullying. In addition, fewer interventions considered individual differences and the characteristics of the context. Moreover, studies on moral disengagement in the Turkish literature started, especially after adopting the Moral Disengagement Scale in Turkish (Gezici-Yalçın 2016, Alparslan 2017). In parallel to this, it has been observed that there is no review article covering intervention studies on moral disengagement and addressing individual predispositions toward moral disengagement in Turkish. Thus, to fill this gap, it would be beneficial for both practical and theoretical knowledge to evaluate who is more prone to moral disengagement, the environmental factors that facilitate or decrease the importance of these predispositions, and the applied studies aimed at reducing moral disengagement. Therefore, this article evaluates the results of individual differences, environmental factors, and applied studies while the limitations are addressed for future studies.

In addition to personality traits that are relatively more stable over time, such as moral identity, moral emotions, political attitudes, and attachment patterns, investigations about individual differences have been reviewed. Environmental factors have been frequently studied in the context of moral disengagement, particularly in the developmental stages and in the scope of school and work environments. In intervention studies, especially programs implemented to reduce moral disengagement were mentioned. Finally, we provide recommendations for future intervention programs by considering to what extent individual and environmental factors are relevant to moral disengagement.

Moral Disengagement

The state of not perceiving actions contrary to one's adopted moral principles as immoral has been addressed in the psychology literature with many different concepts such as moral hypocrisy (Batson et al. 2002), agentic state (Milgram 1974), or moral exclusion (Staub 1990). The concept of moral disengagement (Bandura 1996) emphasizes a broader definition that includes these behaviors and mental processes. Since focusing on moral

disengagement provides an opportunity for a more comprehensive examination, this article reviews "moral disengagement" studies.

Bandura (1986) proposed moral disengagement to describe cognitive mechanisms that lead individuals to feel no cognitive conflict or tension when acting contrary to their moral standards. Explaining moral disengagement mechanisms from a social cognitive perspective, Bandura (1986) emphasized the mechanism that establishes the relationship between moral thinking and moral behavior as a self-moderating process. Accordingly, when people act toward a goal, they monitor their behavior, try to control and evaluate accordingly to their internal standards and regulate this evaluation (self-regulation). In this respect, people who act contrary to their internal standards are expected to feel compelling emotions such as guilt or shame after evaluating their behavior and trying to change it (Bandura 2001).

According to Bandura (2001), moral disengagement, the process by which people do not feel uncomfortable despite violating their internal moral standards, is related to the deactivation of self-regulation mechanisms. Moral disengagement eliminates moral agency and neutralizes the mechanisms that regulate the self according to ethical standards (Bandura 1986). When people engage in actions that contradict their moral standards (or do not exhibit behaviors that they consider morally required), they behave in a way that contradicts their pre-existing positive image of the self. Therefore, the discomfort would remain as long as the conflict is created by these two aspects of reality, namely when the cognitive conflict is unresolved (Festinger 1957, Detert et al. 2008).

At this point, the function of moral disengagement is arranging to eliminate discomfort, as it aligns with the basic theoretical expectations regarding attitude change. "According to this, self-sanctioning, which mediates the relationship between a person's moral standards and actions, is disrupted in moral disengagement. Thus, the person no longer feels like a moral agent. In the ongoing process of moral disengagement, the gap between one's moral thoughts and behavior increases, while the distress caused by the conflict between one's behavior and attitudes has no longer experienced. In this way, moral disengagement explains why one would perform actions contrary to their moral standards or not attempt to prevent a moral violation witnessed (Bandura et al. 2001).
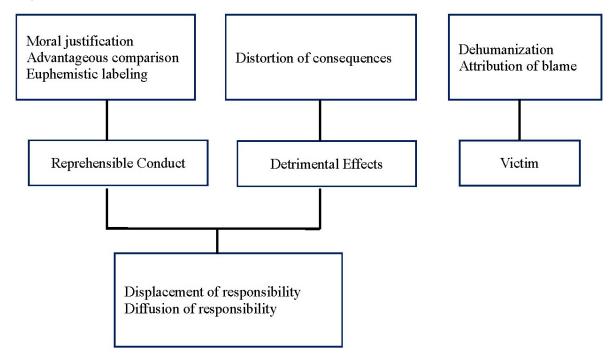

Figure.1 Moral disengagement mechanisms (Bandura 1986)

Moral disengagement mechanisms are characterized by eight different cognitive processes (Figure 1; Bandura 1986). These processes are moral justification, euphemistic labeling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization, and attribution of blame. Bandura (1986) drew attention to three elements in the mechanisms of moral disengagement. The mechanisms can be activated by either displaying anomalous behavior or the outcomes of this behavior or witnessing a victim being exposed to immoral behavior. Briefly, Moore (2015) explains these mechanisms through the following examples: Let us consider a person who steals a newspaper from a store but has the

knowledge that stealing is morally wrong. This person may think that stealing a newspaper is no big deal (distortion of consequences), think that anyone can steal a newspaper (diffusion of responsibility), think that stealing a newspaper is very simple compared to other great evils (advantageous comparison), say that his/her friend pushed him/her into this behavior (displacement of responsibility), say that being an informed citizen who reads the news is more important than the fact that they stole the newspaper (moral justification), say "I took it for a short time" instead of stealing the newspaper (euphemistic labeling), might think that this store is already a nasty, heartless business and that no one would not even notice the newspaper (dehumanization), or one might claim that the store deserved it because the other products are already too expensive (attribution of blame; Moore 2015). These processes contribute to disengagement from the responsibility of immoral behavior. Individuals do not have to experience each of these processes. In some circumstances, only one mechanism can be activated, whereas, in other circumstances, people can engage in more than one mechanism (Bandura et al. 1996).

To summarize, moral disengagement ease the discomfort caused by violating moral standards by freeing him/her from his/her internal standards. In this case, moral violations can be readily accepted or performed since one becomes indifferent to the relationship between his/her behaviors and moral principles. While findings show that the frequency of engaging in moral disengagement might depend on the context, studies also reveal that some personality traits are associated with proneness to engage in moral disengagement. Thus, the next section will discuss individual differences, which are associated with moral disengagement, and the relationships between individual differences in varied contextual factors.

Individual Differences Related to Moral Disengagement

Personality Traits

The Big Five is one of the most popular models that have been addressed to explore the relationships between individual differences and moral disengagement (McCrae and John 1992). Several findings displayed a negative relationship between moral disengagement Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, while a positive relationship with Neuroticism (Caprara et al. 2013, Egan et al. 2015, Zhous et al. 2019). However, the relationship between Openness and Extraversion, two other dimensions of the Big Five personality traits, is inconsistent. For instance, a study conducted with adolescents showed that Extraversion is positively related to moral disengagement (Mazzone and Camodeca 2019), while another study found that Extraversion's enthusiasm subscale is negative, the assertiveness subscale is positively related to moral disengagement (Rengifo and Laham 2022). This recent study showed a negative relationship between the dimensions of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, and moral disengagement tendency (Rengifo and Laham 2022).

To sum up, more compatible, disciplined, emotionally stable, and responsible people are less prone to engage in moral disengagement processes. On the other hand, it is not easy to conclude clearly about Openness and Extraversion due to the mixed findings. One of the possible reasons why Extraversion shows inconsistent relationships with moral disengagement might be that studies often do not specifically consider the sub-dimensions of Extraversion. These findings suggest considering varying contextual factors in the association between Extraversion and moral disengagement.

In addition, some research examines the relationship between personality dimensions and moral disengagement by considering political views. For example, the relationship between Openness-to-experience and moral disengagement was considered in the study of Sverdlik and Rechther (2020). Findings revealed that Orthodox Jews, who have higher levels of openness to experience, also have a higher proneness to engage in moral disengagement. In contrast, this relationship was not replicated for secular Jews. Researchers explained this finding in terms of cultural norms and conservatism. For individuals living in a conservative society, autonomy and freedom sometimes seem to be accompanied by turning one's back on society and rebelling against authority.

In general, the personality trait with the most substantial relationship with moral disengagement among the Big Five personality dimensions was found to be Agreeableness. Agreeableness is defined in the Big Five personality traits as being helpful, soft-hearted, forgiving, and truthful. Considering the definition of Agreeableness implying the sensitivity to the well-being of others, the negative link of it with moral disengagement would not be unexpected. On the other hand, the HEXACO model, developed by considering the Honesty-Humility personality trait, is also frequently used to understand individual differences in recent research (Ashton and Lee

2007). Ogunfowora and Bourdage (2014), for example, found that the Honesty-Humility sub-dimension had a stronger relationship with moral disengagement than Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, and Openness. Therefore, according to the results, in addition to Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, another individual difference negatively related to moral disengagement is Honesty-Humility. Therefore, it may be suggested that future studies addressing the relationship between personality traits and moral disengagement should also consider the HEXACO model.

Another frequently used model in recent studies to address personality traits is the Dark Triad model (Aghababaei and Błachnio 2015), which encompasses personality dimensions associated with a tendency to be insensitive to the well-being of others. As the Dark Triad Model covers personality traits associated with insensitivity to the well-being of others, it is reasonable to expect a positive link with moral disengagement. In line with this expectation, the Dark Triad model has exhibited significant patterns with a tendency toward moral disengagement. According to this model, individuals can be evaluated regarding their socially malevolent traits (at the sub-clinical level) in three dimensions: Psychopathy, Narcissism, and Machiavellianism (Set 2020). Previous studies found a positive relationship between Psychopathy and Machiavellianism, sub-dimensions of the Dark Triad personality model, and the tendency towards moral disengagement (Egan et al. 2015).

In contrast, no significant relationship was observed between Narcissism with moral disengagement. However, in further research, Narcissism exhibited a significant relationship with moral disengagement in sports (Jones et al. 2017). The results of this study indicate that the role of Narcissism may be prominent in moral disengagement in competitive fields, such as sports. In another study, a positive relationship was found between moral disengagement scores in sports and mental toughness in sports among students of a sports sciences faculty in Turkey (Eroglu et al. 2020). Increased motivation to succeed in sports may encourage people to justify moral violations. However, there are few studies, and future research is needed to consider this possibility.

Hereinbefore, research consistently shows that people with high levels of Conscientiousness, as one of the Big Five personality traits, are less prone to moral disengagement (Caprara et al. 2013). Another individual difference addressing the tendency to take responsibility is the internal locus of control (Rotter 1966). Consistently, there was a negative link between internal locus of control, which refers to people's evaluation of the consequences of their behavior by attributing them to their free will, and moral disengagement (Tahrir et al. 2020). One possible reason for having a negative relationship might be that people with a high internal locus of control consider themselves more responsible for their behaviors, which in turn engage lower levels of self-regulation processes that help eliminate the distress caused by immoral acts. Another possible reason is that the higher the internal locus of control, the more the person internalizes morality-related values. Evaluating together, personality traits associated with positive aspects of social behaviors, such as being responsible and having a high internal locus of control beliefs, might contribute to disengagement from moral disengagement.

To summarize, Honesty-Humility, Agreeableness, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism were found to be defining personality traits in understanding moral disengagement. However, it is impossible to say that these differences are entirely independent of other individual differences. Political views and cultural differences were also significant in the relationship between personality traits and moral disengagement (Sverdlik and Rechther 2020). These findings all indicate that differences in personality traits can significantly contribute to future interventions. Considering the differences in personality traits would facilitate the preparation of appropriate content for the intervention programs for the targeted audience, easing better outcomes. Considering previous research, programs aiming to enhance the awareness of responsibility, internal locus of control, and emotional stability contribute to having efficient results.

Moral Character, Moral Identity

Even though people have different conceptualizations of moral identity, past evidence also shows that expectations about the characteristics of a moral person are primarily similar across cultures and ages (Aquino and Reed 2002, Hardy and Carlo 2011). Cohen and colleagues (2014) conceptualized moral character as an individual trait as a multidimensional construct. Accordingly, the conceptualization of moral character includes different aspects of the personality as Honesty-Humility, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, empathetic tendencies, feeling of guilt, self-control, and moral identity. Moral character, according to this conceptualization, involves caring for the interests and needs of others and considering the consequences of one's behavior on others. At the same time, individuals are also helped by these traits defined as a moral character when they regulate their behavior considering the short- or long-term consequences of their behavior. In this respect, high responsibility and self-control are expected to be generally effective in regulating one's behavior, in general, as well as effective in regulating one's moral decisions and behaviors, in particular (Hardy et al. 2015).

Cohen and colleagues (2014) investigated the relationship between sub-dimensions of moral character and specific behaviors in the work environment. They found that people with low moral character traits were more likely to engage in harmful behaviors, be more negligent, and be more tolerant of negative behaviors in the work environment. This conceptualization of moral character highlights the factors negatively related to moral disengagement. Particular examinations of the relationship between moral disengagement mechanisms and moral character traits showed that people with a higher tendency towards honesty and humility are less prone to moral disengagement (Ogunfowora and Bourdage 2014). Similarly, there is a negative relationship between the level of empathy and the tendency to feel guilt and moral disengagement (Paciello et al. 2013, Tillman et al. 2018).

Aquino and colleagues (2007) stated that moral identity has to maintain the link between one's moral principles and behavior as a reflection of the internalization of moral identity. Thus, individuals with stronger internalizations are more likely to activate self-moderating mechanisms such as moral identity and principles, while their moral agency is less likely to be deactivated. Previous research also provided findings in line with this assumption (Aquino et al. 2007, Detert et al. 2008). For example, Hardy and colleagues (2015) underlined that moral identity creates a crucial buffering effect in reducing the impacts of moral disengagement.

According to recent studies, moral identity, family, and school climate, as contextual factors, regulate the relationship between moral disengagement and immoral behavior (e.g., bullying) in adolescence (Wang et al. 2019, Teng et al. 2020). For example, according to the study conducted by Wang and colleagues (2019), the relationship between school climate and immoral behavior is mediated by moral disengagement. Additionally, this model is moderated by the perceived moral identity of the friends. Interacting with friends with a higher moral identity protects against immoral behavior for students experiencing moral disengagement in a negative school climate. These findings shed light on the importance of environmental factors in understanding the psychological processes related to moral disengagement.

On the other hand, in a study with adolescents, Zhang and colleagues (2021) found that moral identity was associated with immoral behavior. However, moral identity did not significantly moderate the direct relationship between parenting style and moral disengagement. The researchers explained these contradictory findings by addressing the environmental factors (e.g., parenting styles) which may affect moral cognition and behavior strongly, regardless of the level of moral identity. Since there are few studies on this topic, further research is needed to elucidate the moderating effect of moral identity on the relationship between immoral behavior, contextual factors, and moral disengagement.

Moral Emotions

Moral emotions refer to the emotional responses elicited by behaviors linked to moral values and principles, which motivate individuals to engage in moral actions (Haidt 2003). Moral emotions help people foresee negative consequences, increasing the possibility of regulating behavior (Malti et al. 2009). Pride and gratitude, considered among the positive moral emotions, are especially experienced when someone acts in line with individual and social moral principles. Again, people often feel guilt or shame when they violate these principles.

We can also understand the critical role of moral emotions by appealing specifically to the psychological mechanism underlying moral disengagement. There are many findings in the moral psychology literature that moral emotions motivate behavior (Prinz 2006, Prinz 2007). Guilt and shame are described as emotions experienced due to negative evaluations (or the possibility of negative evaluations) of oneself and others (Smith et al. 2002). The reduction in psychological distress among individuals may be attributed to eliminating guilt and shame's functional role. This view is compatible with the argument that moral emotions mediate between moral behavior and standards (Tangney et al. 2007). More specifically, moral disengagement mechanisms can hinder the experience of moral emotions that arise from one's behavior by impairing self-regulatory functions. In parallel to this, apathy level was positively correlated with moral disengagement in a study conducted with university students in Turkey (Erik 2022). These findings provide evidence for the contribution of loss of motivation in emotional processes to engage in moral disengagement.

Another study found that individuals with a greater propensity for moral disengagement reported experiencing fewer moral emotions (Zych et al. 2020). Perren and Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger (2012) showed that the absence of experiencing moral effects is associated with cyberbullying. In this study, moral emotions mediate the relationship between moral disengagement and immoral behaviors. Previous research also confirmed the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying (Gini 2006, Obermann 2011). Nevertheless, there were mixed results regarding the direct relationship between cyberbullying and moral disengagement. For example,

some research shows that high levels of moral disengagement do not predict cyberbullying (Bauman and Pero 2011, Perren and Futzwiller-Helfenfinger 2012). However, other studies (e.g., Pornari and Wood 2010, Bauman 2010) demonstrated a significant relationship between cyberbullying and moral disengagement. Therefore, the mixed findings on this issue should be clarified.

Previous results suggest that being more inclined to experience moral emotions may reduce the effect of moral disengagement. Therefore, developing content that can trigger moral emotions and encourage more frequent displays of moral emotions may be helpful for interventions to reduce moral disengagement and immoral behavior.

Political Attitudes

Another category influences individuals' moral evaluations and demonstrates visible differences in political attitudes (Graham et al. 2009). Conservatives and liberals attribute different levels of importance to moral sensitivities when evaluating moral violations (Haidt and Graham 2007). For instance, individuals with higher levels of liberalism tend to view harm and fairness violations as morally wrong. In contrast, individuals with higher levels of conservatism tend to view harm and fairness violations, as well as violations related to sanctity, ingroup loyalty, and obedience to authority, as morally wrong to a similar extent (Graham et al. 2009). Given the different moral sensitivities of conservatives and liberals, it is logical to anticipate differences in their propensities towards moral disengagement. In line with this expectation, research on the relationship between moral disengagement and political attitudes and perceptions of social structures exists.

Findings on the relationship between political attitudes and perceptions of social structures and moral disengagement are varied. In a study by Jackson and Gaertner (2010), no significant difference was found between the moral disengagement tendencies of people who adopted different political views. Another study found a positive relationship between conservatism and moral disengagement in the Orthodox Jewish sample, but no significant relationship was found in the Secular Jewish sample (Sverdlik and Rechter 2020). The reason for these mixed results is the differentiation in moral disengagement levels depending on the violation's content. In other words, different political views relate to different aspects of moral disengagement.

It should also be noted that a similar finding regarding this expectation is put forward by Jackson and Gaertner (2010). This study examined participants' right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation and their tendency to moral disengagement. Social Dominance Orientation is a construct that measures the degree to which individuals endorse the hierarchical structure of society, wherein one group is deemed superior to another (Sidanius and Pratto 1999). Previous results demonstrated that Social Dominance Orientation is associated with prejudice, such as dehumanizing external ethnic groups (Costello and Hodson 2009). Likewise, Right Wing Authoritarianism is defined by a tendency to submit excessively to established authority in society, hostility towards individuals not endorsed by the authority, and rigid adherence to traditions approved by the authority (Altemeyer 1996). Jackson and Gaertner (2010) found that underestimation of the consequences of war and moral justifications are associated with right-wing authoritarianism.

Additionally, the study revealed a significant correlation between right-wing authoritarianism and moral justification and a strong association between social dominance orientation and the dehumanization and blaming of victims. Therefore, different political attitudes predispose to different mechanisms of moral disengagement. However, since there are limited studies, future studies are required to test this possibility.

Similar to the results of Jackson and Gaertner (2010), Yalçın (2017) also found a positive link between moral disengagement, social dominance orientation, and right-wing authoritarianism in Turkey. In other words, individuals with higher levels of social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism were more prone to moral disengagement. It is reasonable to expect that individuals' endorsement of the hierarchical structure in society shares some psychological mechanisms with the tendency to blame victims. Thus, the findings suggest that in future intervention studies, it may be essential to decrease the emphasis on hierarchy within or between groups and promote similar conditions to diminish moral disengagement.

Attachment Style

The first relationship pattern between the caregiver and the infant shapes the dynamics of close relationships (Bowlby 1973). It prepares the ground for shaping the motivation to exhibit positive social behaviors toward others (Shaver et al. 2010). The relationship with the first attachment figure has been categorized as secure, avoidant, anxious, and in the field of research examining the assumptions of attachment theory. It has also been considered an interpersonal variable to examine individual differences (Bartholomew and Horowitz 1991). In

romantic relationships, for example, anxious or avoidant attachments are found to be less sensitive to their partners' feelings and less willing to help than secure attachments (Collins and Feeney 2000). The caregiving system is a general mechanism that explains the extent to which we are willing to transfer resources to individuals in need, even if we are not closely related to them. The level of positive social behaviors we exhibit toward people we do not know, for example, relates to how securely attached we are in relationships (Shaver et al. 2010). Securely attached individuals correctly identify situations in which others are in need, leading them to use more effective strategies to make appropriate resource investments. On the other hand, avoidant and anxiously attached individuals either fail to identify the problem or are indifferent and fail to make appropriate investments in the identified problem, respectively (Mikulincer and Shaver 2005, Shaver and colleagues 2010). Therefore, individual differences in attachment styles shape people's moral decisions.

It would not be unexpected for individuals with avoidant attachment, which is associated with higher levels of indifference towards the welfare of others, to be more susceptible to moral disengagement. In parallel, Shaver and Mikulincer (2012) found that individuals with higher levels of anxious attachment were also more likely to make moral choices when reminded of memories associated with secure attachment. However, the same findings were not reached for avoidant attachment. This difference was an exploratory finding for the question of how attachment patterns and evocation of secure attachment would change moral behaviors. In addition, Chugh and colleagues (2014) extended the contribution of secure attachment to moral behavior by using the moral disengagement perspective. According to the results, when the effect of being securely attached was evoked, participants were more likely to resist the moral disengagement tendency to turn into unethical behavior. This tendency suggests that the situational effect of secure attachment can eliminate the effect of moral disengagement tendency. According to Bao and colleagues' (2015) study, there was a negative correlation between secure attachment to parents and criminal behavior in Chinese adolescents, with moral disengagement as a mediator in this relationship.

Although the research on attachment has revealed significant results about its relationship with moral and prosocial behaviors, the findings on its relationship with moral disengagement are still scarce. Few findings have emphasized that the evocation of secure attachment is a factor that reduces moral disengagement. Future research on the protective effect of secure attachment from moral disengagement will contribute to future prevention programs.

Assessing Individual Differences in Moral Disengagement

When the individual differences associated with moral disengagement are considered, it is observed that being prone to moral disengagement is associated with both positive personality traits, such as Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, and dark personality traits, such as Psychopathy and Machiavellianism, while being prone to moral disengagement is accompanied by low levels of moral emotionality. Political attitudes partly explain people's indifference and alienation from moral violations. Finally, a few studies suggest that attachment styles and the caregiving system are essential for moral disengagement tendencies. These individual differences are useful not only for evaluating the theoretical assumptions put forward to understand the psychological mechanisms of moral disengagement but also for applied psychological studies. Considering the characteristics of the target group will increase the likelihood of successful results in prevention and intervention studies. The following section discusses the contents of previous studies in the relevant literature aimed at preventing or reducing moral disengagement based on the findings on individual differences. Potential protective factors are also discussed in the context of the presented findings.

Intervention studies focus specifically on adolescence, and some environmental factors have a significant mediating role in explaining moral disengagement during adolescence. Therefore, in the next section, empirical findings on moral disengagement in school and work will be examined, followed by studies testing the effectiveness of intervention programs.

Moral Disengagement in Different Contexts

In addition to individual differences, moral disengagement can also be examined according to the contexts in which it occurs. In the case of children and adolescents, studies have focused on exploring moral disengagement in the school environment, with a particular emphasis on peer relationships and parental attitudes. In contrast, studies on moral disengagement in the work environment have primarily focused on adults.

Studies conducted in childhood and adolescence often consider behaviors in the school environment, school climate, and the contribution of friendships to moral disengagement. Again, studies focus on adolescence rather

than childhood. One potential reason why moral disengagement is studied more in adolescence is that moral disengagement is more prevalent in adolescence than in childhood. A longitudinal study examining moral disengagement from adolescence to young adulthood revealed that individuals in early and middle adolescence were more prone to moral disengagement and used more moral disengagement mechanisms than other age groups (De Caroli and Sagone 2014). For example, Gini and colleagues (2014) found that aggression in adolescence was more strongly associated with moral disengagement than in childhood. Caravita and colleagues (2014) conducted a longitudinal study showing that moral disengagement is experienced more in early adolescence compared to childhood. In addition, in this study, moral disengagement in early adolescence was related to peer socialization, while this relationship was not evident in childhood. De Caroli and Sagone (2014) similarly showed that different mechanisms of moral disengagement were more frequently used in different developmental periods. Based on the results, it was found that diffusion of responsibility is more commonly used in mid and late adolescence while blaming the victim and moral justification are less frequent. Additionally, dehumanization and minimization of consequences mechanisms are used more frequently in early adolescence.

Another longitudinal study examining the relationship and persistence of moral disengagement and aggressive behavior during adolescence found that moral disengagement had a significant role in violent and aggressive behaviors. Moral disengagement emerged more strongly between the ages of 14-16 compared to other ages and gradually decreased after the age of 16 (Paciello et al. 2008). This decline is explained by the increase in cognitive and social abilities in middle and late adolescence, the development of skills to anticipate consequences, the ability to regulate behavior, and the ability to learn from past social experiences. For example, Caravita and colleagues (2012) conducted a study with elementary and middle school students, and they found that bullying was associated with moral disengagement in middle school children. In contrast, the only relationship with moral disengagement was evident when justifying the victim for elementary school children.

In another study, Yavuz-Birben and Bacanlı (2017) found that 9th-grade students had higher moral disengagement scores than 10th-grade students in Turkey. Although late adolescence is rarely addressed within the scope of moral disengagement, a study conducted in late adolescence found that moral disengagement was more common in males than females in Turkey (Turan 2021). However, another study observed that moral disengagement was reported more frequently in women than men in participants aged between 18-25 (Kocatürk and Kurtça 2021).

Bullying is another behavior frequently observed in the school environment during adolescence, and its relation with moral disengagement is well known (Menesini et al. 2003). Bullying (both peer bullying and cyberbullying) is positively associated with moral disengagement (Wang et al. 2019, Zych et al. 2020). Although many personality traits contribute to the emergence of bullying, moral disengagement, and empathy are the most important distinguishing characteristics that predict bullying (Gini et al. 2014). Therefore, research on the relationship between bullying and moral disengagement is also essential for adolescent intervention and prevention studies. A study involving young people between the ages of 18-25 from Turkey found that moral disengagement significantly predicted cyberbullying and peer bullying (Kocatürk and Kurtça 2021).

According to recent studies, a positive school climate shows a substantial buffer effect on the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying behavior (e.g., Teng et al. 2020). A positive school climate, as a relatively stable characteristic of the school, describes the structure and quality of school culture (Yang et al. 2020). There are different findings that students who perceive a more positive school climate engage in fewer bullying behaviors (Espelage et al. 2014, Chan et al. 2015). For example, Teng and colleagues (2020) investigated the moderating role of school climate in a longitudinal study involving 2997 Chinese adolescent students with an average age of 14. According to these findings, (i) students with higher moral disengagement and negative perceptions of school climate engage in more bullying than students with lower moral disengagement and more positive perceptions of school climate; (ii) students with higher moral disengagement and more negative perceptions of school climate exhibit higher levels of bullying behavior over time; and (iii) the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying is weaker and less significant for students with more positive perceptions of school climate.

These findings suggest that further investigation is warranted to explore the potential preventive effect of a positive school climate on the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying among students.

Several studies highlight the significant mediating role of moral disengagement for adolescents. Hyde and colleagues (2010) suggested that mental processes can mediate the relationship between contextual risk factors and negative behaviors. In parallel to this, in a longitudinal study conducted with adolescents from low socio-economic status, it was found that the moral disengagement score of 15-year-old participants mediated the relationship between rejecting parenting (parenting style characterized by hostility and low positive affect)

experienced at the age of 1.5 - 2 and antisocial behaviors such as bullying at the age of 16-17. These results support the significant role of moral disengagement between early risk factors and long-term adverse behavioral outcomes. The authors interpreted this finding as a potential cognitive mechanism that plays a role in the relationship between early risk factors and later negative behaviors. In other words, while parents' negative parenting styles are a potential risk factor determining long-term antisocial behaviors, moral disengagement emerges as an intervenable cognitive mechanism in this relationship.

Zhang and colleagues (2021) conducted a study with 1796 Chinese adolescents and found that moral disengagement mediated the relationship between parenting style and cyberbullying. In other studies, findings proved that moral disengagement mediates the relationship between parenting style and behaviors such as aggression and bullying (Yang and Wang 2011, Bao et al. 2015). Zhang and colleagues (2021) showed that moral disengagement mediated the relationship between rejecting, overprotective, and responsive (emotionally warm) parenting styles and cyber aggression. In other words, adolescents who perceive high levels of rejection, overprotection, or low levels of responsive parenting style were more likely to engage in moral disengagement, indirectly leading them to display higher levels of aggressive behaviors.

Bao and colleagues (2015) showed a negative relationship between secure attachment and adverse behavioral outcomes, such as threatening someone and taking their belongings by force. The mediating role of moral disengagement can explain this relationship. In a study by Zych and colleagues (2020), the relationship between perceived parental moral disengagement induction and bullying behavior in early adolescence was mediated by moral disengagement tendency. Based on the findings, children who perceive their parents as not taking responsibility for their behavior and justifying themselves are more likely to experience moral disengagement towards aggressive behaviors, such as bullying and cyberbullying. Additionally, children's level of moral disengagement is not only influenced by the level of moral disengagement they perceive from their family members but also affects their tendencies to bully. Therefore, many findings indicate that it is vital to evaluate the bullying behaviors associated with moral disengagement in adolescence and parenting.

As mentioned in the previous section, empathy, moral identity, and self-awareness must be addressed to explain an individual predisposition to moral disengagement. Similarly, Zeng and colleagues (2020) showed that moral disengagement has a mediating role in the relationship between gratitude level and cyberbullying behavior in adolescents. Adolescents who showed more gratitude were found to use less moral disengagement mechanisms and, thus, less likely to cyberbully their peers. At the same time, children more prone to experience moral emotions show less bullying behavior, and moral emotions mediate the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying (Zych et al. 2020). Therefore, developing positive personality traits such as gratefulness and a tendency towards positive moral emotions is important for interventions targeting adolescence to reduce moral disengagement and bullying behavior.

Zelidman (2014) proved that empathy levels have a moderating role in the relationship between moral disengagement tendencies and bullying behaviors of adolescents. As empathy increases, moral disengagement and bullying behavior decrease; as empathy decreases, moral disengagement and participation in bullying behavior increase. Zeng and colleagues (2020) showed that self-awareness and moral disengagement mediate the relationship between gratitude and adolescent bullying behavior. Therefore, the findings in the literature point to the role of individuals' positive personality traits (such as empathy, gratitude, and self-awareness) in reducing moral disengagement and bullying. According to the study by Wang and colleagues (2019), the indirect relationship between school climate and cyberbullying through moral disengagement turned insignificant from significant for adolescents who interact with friends with high moral identity. In other words, the relationship between school climate and cyberbullying behavior is mediated by moral disengagement. Also, this model is moderated by the perceived moral identity of the friend.

On the other hand, in the study of Zhang and colleagues (2021), although moral identity was associated with bullying, it did not emerge as a significant moderating factor in the direct relationship between parenting style and moral disengagement in adolescence. The researchers evaluated the conflicting results with previous findings (Wang et al. 2019) with the interpretation that contextual factors (e.g., parenting styles) might more strongly influence moral cognition and behavior, independent of the level of moral identity. However, more research is needed to elucidate the moderating role of moral identity on the relationship between bullying, parenting styles, and moral disengagement. Again, since the reflections of parenting-related differences on childhood and adolescent outcomes related to morality-related decisions and behaviors are open to socio-economic level and culture-specific variations (Miller et al. 2019), replicating these studies in varied cultures and at different levels of socio-economic status would also contribute significantly to observe the generalizability of the results.

In addition, moral disengagement, as an essential variable predicting negative behaviors in work life (Moore 2008), has also been considered in research examining organizational context. Although there is no intervention/training program in the organizational context to reduce moral disengagement, a large amount of research studies the aspects of moral disengagement that affect decision-making in the workplace. Experimental studies have illuminated the factors that increase moral disengagement in the work environment and the mediating and moderating factors in this relationship. For example, a systematic review by Newman and colleagues (2020) combined the studies to observe the mediating and moderating role of moral disengagement in work behavior, attitude towards work, team behavior, and organizational behavior outcomes. The mediating and moderating roles of moral disengagement in the relationship between individual or organizational factors, such as identification with the organization, ethical leadership, power relationship, organizational climate, organizational injustice, and work behavior, have been provided. One of this review's salient findings is that working with a positive leader reduces moral disengagement and prevents unethical behavior. At the same time, people who think they have been exposed to injustice in the organizational context report more moral disengagement tendencies and indirectly engage in more harmful behaviors in the work environment. Therefore, reviewing employees' perceptions of justice may be the first step to reducing moral disengagement in the workplace.

In another study, Kish-Gephard and colleagues (2014) examined the effect of self-interest-enhancing situations on moral disengagement in an experimental study conducted in the USA with 147 college students with an average age of 20 years. The main expectation of the researchers is that people will more easily depart from their adopted moral standards in situations that offer opportunities to attract self-interest in the work environment. However, the main effect of self-interest on moral disengagement did not emerge. Researchers explained these findings by referring to the ceiling effect and the low variance in the scores obtained. On the other hand, the researchers also considered the possible preventive effect of reminding of harming others and self-discipline in this research. The results showed that the effect of self-interest on moral disengagement decreased when harm to others was emphasized. At the same time, even when strong self-interest is emphasized, people with high levels of Conscientiousness resort to moral disengagement less than others. The results of the study conducted by Kish-Gephart and colleagues (2014) demonstrate the protective effect of reminding individuals about potential harm and positive personal characteristics, such as conscientiousness, in situations where tempting opportunities arise in the work environment that may benefit them.

Intervention Programs on Moral Disengagement

Moral disengagement is highly susceptible to applied research due to its subject matter. Although previous studies have shown that many factors decrease or increase the tendency of individuals to moral disengagement, these studies have rarely been tested in applied research. However, it is seen that prevention and intervention programs that can reduce moral disengagement strategies are needed in order to solve many issues at the societal and individual levels. Therefore, this section reviews intervention studies aimed at reducing moral disengagement.

The initial studies on reducing moral disengagement were primarily focused on interventions for childhood and adolescence, as is seen in the research of Moore (2015). For example, McAlister's (2001) intervention study with 73 adolescents living in the USA and Finland, prepared to reduce moral disengagement, is one of the first intervention studies. The study examined whether engaging in persuasive communication with participants that either supported moral disengagement or resisted moral disengagement reduced moral disengagement. One group of students was assigned to the communication condition that supported US and NATO military actions in Iraq and Yugoslavia (support of moral disengagement). In contrast, the other group was assigned to the communication condition that did not support the action (resistance of moral disengagement). Then, participants took measures of moral disengagement and endorsement of specific military actions. The difference between the pre-test and post-test measures showed that engaging in persuasive communication changed the scores for endorsing military actions for resisting and supporting conditions. In other words, there was a change in attitudes towards communication content in both the resistance to moral disengagement (not supporting military actions) and support for moral disengagement (supporting military actions) conditions. However, since there was no control group in the study, it is questionable whether the effect was caused by persuasive communication or by engaging in any communication. Although it is possible to say that the study shows the effect of communication on short-term attitudes, these findings do not provide any long-term effect on moral disengagement since there need to be follow-up studies.

Another intervention program on moral disengagement was carried out by Wang and Goldberg (2017) within the scope of the Bullying Literature Project, which was created by Wang and Goldberg (2017) to raise awareness about bullying in the school environment with 98 children aged 7-9 (see Wang et al. 2015). The project used stories to promote practical problem-solving, develop social skills, and encourage intervention by children who were bystanders to bullying. Following the events in the stories, role-plays were conducted over five weeks and discussed with the children why each moral disengagement strategy should not be used as a justification for bullying. After each story, the children were asked to write and practice what they had learned (e.g., making a bookmark, completing a story, or creating a poster or storybook with the group). The project outputs were discussed with other teachers in the school, the school psychologist, and the principal, who were informed about the problems identified with bullying and encouraged students in their bullying interventions. Thus, students and other actors in the school environment were involved in the process students were asked to share their practices with their siblings and parents to support the involvement of parents. In addition, parents were provided with book recommendations on bullying and a letter introducing the content of the intervention program. At the end of the study, it was observed that children who participated in the intervention program used moral disengagement to justify bullying less than the control group. Besides, after the intervention, children's friendship relationships were improved.

In another study, Bustamante and Chaux (2014) conducted two separate intervention programs for one hundred sixteen 9th-grade students in Colombia. The first intervention study focused on critical thinking and social regulation, while the second focused on persuasion and behavioral journalism. In the critical thinking and social regulation intervention program, the definition and structure of moral disengagement were presented, the mechanisms of moral disengagement were explained, the situations in which moral disengagement can occur were discussed, and participants were expected to brainstorm about what they could use instead of moral disengagement mechanisms, such as compensating for the damage instead of blaming someone else for the mistake. In the persuasion and behavioral journalism intervention program, students who learned about moral disengagement processes prepared a newspaper article about how they and others can validate and legitimize their own and other people's immoral behavior. Then, the students were divided into older and younger age groups. The students in the older age group engaged in persuasive communication about why their legitimization was inappropriate by using the examples obtained from the articles. The second intervention was similar to McAlister's (2001) intervention program in persuasive communication.

On the other hand, in this case, it was expected that older students would be dissuaded from resorting to moral disengagement when persuading others. Compared to the control group, students in each intervention group showed a significant decrease in the levels of moral disengagement. According to the data from the focus group interviews, two themes emerged from the intervention programs. The first intervention group reported that the program motivated them to resist moral disengagement, and they found it very useful to learn alternative ways to justify their actions. The second intervention group expressed a desire for more striking examples of justification.

In an intervention study by Yavuz-Birben (2019), an awareness training program on moral disengagement was prepared for high school students in Turkey. In the study conducted with twenty-six participants, half of the students were assigned to the intervention group and the other half to the control group. The intervention program included basic concepts such as empathy, self-awareness, moral awareness, prejudice, value, defense mechanisms, and social rules. The pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group showed a significant decrease in moral disengagement scores, and the results of the follow-up test conducted four months later. The findings showed the long-lasting effects of the intervention program. No difference was observed in the control group. An important limitation of this intervention study was the low number of participants. Therefore, there is a need for further research conducted with a representative number of participants.

Evaluation of Intervention Programs on Moral Disengagement

In general, intervention studies on moral disengagement focus on adolescents. Based on the studies, there are different ways to reduce moral disengagement, such as conducting comprehensive evaluations on moral issues, using persuasive communication techniques, or reminding participants of the positive personal characteristics of conscientiousness. These approaches have been found to have a significant impact on reducing moral disengagement. However, there are some common limitations of the studies. First, the sample group tested in these studies is generally tiny. Second, the role of some individual differences that seem related to different attitudes toward morality has been ignored. For example, socio-economic status, cultural differences, participants' attachment styles, or political views can affect outcomes for addressing the moral issue but are

often not considered. Finally, context-specific variations of individual differences should have been more noticed. Addressing these limitations in future studies would benefit the development of applied programs to reduce moral disengagement.

Conclusion

Moral disengagement theory (Bandura 1996) points to eight different cognitive mechanisms that reduce the stress people experience when engaging in immoral behavior. Previous research demonstrated that being more prone to engage in these eight different mechanisms is related to some individual differences. Additionally, consistent with the theoretical predictions, moral disengagement should be viewed not only as an individual predisposition but also as a factor that mediates and moderates other variables (Moore, 2015). Identifying various individual and contextual factors that contribute to moral disengagement through empirical studies can enrich intervention and prevention studies to reduce engagement in moral disengagement. Therefore, this review aims to address both individual differences that may explain the predisposition to moral disengagement, environmental factors that facilitate the emergence of these differences, and applied studies aimed at reducing moral disengagement.

It has been concluded that studies have frequently examined the predisposition to moral disengagement by focusing on personality factors. These examinations show that Honesty-Humility, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism are associated with moral disengagement (Egan et al. 2015). Although it has rarely been studied, attachment, political attitudes, moral identity, and moral emotions are also associated with moral disengagement (Ogunfowora and Bourdage 2014). These results suggest that the increase in moral disengagement can be partially explained by experiencing less moral emotions, having insecure attachment patterns, and giving less importance to the characteristics of moral identity (Jackson and Gaertner 2010, Chugh et al. 2014, Bao et al. 2015, Yalçın 2017, Zych et al. 2020).

Nevertheless, it is essential to underline that the results of these studies cannot be evaluated based on a cause-and-effect relationship since they do based on correlational designs rather than experimental ones. Moreover, some studies reveal the importance of contextual factors and individual predispositions. Shu and colleagues (2011) provided consistent evidence by demonstrating an increase in the levels of moral disengagement after individuals engaged in particularly unethical behavior. Therefore, taken together, these findings emphasize the importance of considering both individual and context-specific differences in evaluating the findings regarding the predispositions for moral disengagement.

Although a few studies show that individual differences are essential for susceptibility to moral disengagement, applied research overlooked individual differences to reduce moral disengagement. This overlook is a significant limitation of the studies aiming to develop intervention programs. The goal of intervention studies is not to change fixed personality traits, but it is reasonable to expect that applied studies consider individual differences. Therefore, considering individual differences in the designs of the applications might increase the efficiency of interventions aiming to reduce moral disengagement. For example, although the relationship between secure attachment and moral emotionality with the predisposition to moral disengagement is quite suitable to be included in the content of intervention or prevention programs, it has never been considered.

Additionally, empirical findings indicate that people's attitudes towards unethical practices may change by increasing the experience of moral emotions. Based on this, another suggestion is to provide intervention programs to stimulate moral emotions and support secure attachment patterns, and future research needs to provide empirical evidence for this suggestion.

Several environmental factors affect the relationship between moral disengagement and bullying behavior. For example, environmental factors such as school climate, parenting style, secure attachment to parents, perceived friendship norms, and self-arrangement skills that support individual characteristics such as self-awareness skills and empathy level are candidates to be the subject of prevention and intervention studies in adolescence (Wang et al. 2019, Teng et al. 2020, Zhang et al. 2021). However, there needs to be more investigation addressing these variables in interventions and prevention. Studies showing that adolescence is a critical period for understanding the susceptibility to moral disengagement (De Caroli and Sagone 2014) show a need for more intervention/prevention studies with adolescents.

Existing intervention studies have found that telling people how moral disengagement works or encouraging people to think critically plays a role in reducing moral disengagement. Besides, people become more resistant to moral disengagement when they are encouraged to think about the future consequences of their behavior and to be empathetic as part of their moral identity. A comprehensive intervention study in Turkey proved the

effectiveness of awareness training for moral disengagement by focusing on concepts such as empathy, morality, and values (Yavuz-Birben 2019). However, no ecological intervention program involving families and peers has been evident. Recent findings on parenting styles and school climate suggest that programs focused on promoting parents' moral values and improving school climate may be beneficial for reducing bullying and possibly other types of antisocial behaviors. Empirical evidence is required to test the generalizability and validity of these suggestions based on the previous work.

Another important gap in the literature is related to the cross-sectional nature of the studies. The studies were generally conducted over a single period, and no consideration was given to whether the intervention's effectiveness persisted later. This enables us to speak on the causality and the impermanence of the factors increasing moral disengagement. Overall, experimental replications would help us to rely on the existing findings.

In conclusion, despite its potential for an applied field, moral disengagement needs to be addressed in intervention and prevention programs in psychological research. Thus, we recommend developing interventions/preventions considering previous research showing the contributions of various individual and environmental factors, such as secure attachment, moral emotionality, positive school climate, supportive and responsive parenting, and personality traits, to enrich the efficiency of the outcomes.

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