

Moral Disengagement and Classroom Incivility against the Social Responsibility Character of Junior High School Students

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Abstract

Nowadays social responsibility is significant to investigate. It is because in the academic world there are a number of students having low social responsibility. This behavior is realized by unfair actions in groups, bullying or intimidation practice. Concerning this phenomenon, the current study aimed at analyzing the prediction of students' social responsibility from the perspective of moral disengagement and incivility. This correlational study involved 636 students with a portion of 49.5% of male students and 50.5% of female students. They were selected using cluster sampling from two junior high schools in Central Java. After that, these students were asked to fill in a moral disengagement scale, and classroom incivility scale. The results showed that moral disengagement and incivility significantly predicted social responsibility ($R=0.336$, $R^2=0.113$, $F=6.079$, and $P<0.01$). Specifically, the findings of this study confirmed that the aspects of Moral Justification and Dehumanization, as well as intentional incivility, predict students' social responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings. That is why they need to have the character of responsibility in social life. Many factors are influencing the level of one's social responsibility, such as empathy, moral development, and self-concepts that develop since childhood and adolescence (Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). School is a place to teach responsibility to students. Students who are socially responsible tend to have a greater concern for ethical and moral issues (Gough, McClosky, & Meehl, 1952).

People who act maturely and socially responsible have a strength of character in citizenship, a higher level of social trust, and a more positive view of human nature (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Concerning this, social responsibility is related to morality. The theory of moral reasoning indicates that social responsibility attitudes are derived from justice-based moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1969). Meanwhile, the social-cognitive theory states that morality refers to the concept of human well-being, justice, and respect for human rights as forms of maintaining personal relationships (Nucci, 2001).

Previous studies revealed that those who have high moral sensitivity are children who are against moral disengagement and oppose immoral acts, for example, intimidation against humans. It is also known that moral disengagement is positively related to aggression (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Regalia, 2001; Barchia & Bussey, 2011; Paciello, Fida, Tramontano, Lupinetti, & Caprara,

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2008; Pelton, Gound, Forehand, & Brody, 2004; Pornari & Wood, 2010; White-Ajmani & Bursik, 2014), including bullying behavior toward others (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser, 2011; Hymel, Rocke-Henderson, & Bonanno, 2005; Menesini et al., 2003; Obermann, 2011; Perren, Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, Malti, & Hymel, 2012), and antisocial behavior (Bandura et al., 1996, 2001; Hyde, Shaw, & Moilanen, 2010). Besides, intimidating others is also a form of social irresponsibility and moral disengagement.

Incivility is an errant behavior that is disruptive and even harmful so that it may cause the learning atmosphere disharmonious (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Boysen, 2012; Knepp, 2012; Miller, Katt, Brown, & Sivo, 2014). This kind of behavior has various levels, starting from not listening to the discussion, lack of attention to the class, lateness, absence, having a chat with friends when teacher is explaining materials, sleeping in class, saying dirty words, having a physical or verbal contact against teachers or other students (Alberts, Hazen, & Theobald, 2010). Other forms of this behavior are such as intimidating peers, harassment, and threatening friends and teachers (Burke, Karl, Peluchette, & Evans, 2014; Feldmann, 2001). Thus, performing classroom incivility is a form of misconduct that affects one's social responsibility.

If the previous studies discussed the relationship between responsibility and moral disengagement, the current study aimed at examining which moral disengagement and incivility aspects influenced the relationship with students' social responsibility. These were done because responsibility is a significant thing in human life aspects, particularly in social life. Moreover, the authors were also interested in knowing whether there was a relationship between responsibility, moral disengagement, and classroom incivility seen from the influencing aspects. These matters were used as the basis for determining the next intervention.

METHODS

This study belonged to a correlational study and involved 3 variables, namely responsibility, moral disengagement, and classroom incivility. For more, the respondents of this study were selected using cluster sampling from two junior high schools in Semarang City and Temanggung Regency. 636 students were covering 321 female students, and 315 male students from the seventh and eighth grades.

The data collection was carried out using three instruments. First, the instrument used to collect the data of responsibility variable was an academic integrity scale designed by Ramdani (2018) containing 10 statement items. The validity of this scale was measured based on a correlation 0.00 and the reliability 0.769. The scale was rated using the Likert scale in which the statement items were favorable and contained 5 answer choices (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Second, moral disengagement was measured using moral disengagement scale developed by Bandura et al., (1996) containing 32 statement items with the validity is 0.00 and reliability is 0.786. This instrument was rated using the Likert scale in which the statement items were unfavorable, and available with 4 answer choices (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Third, classroom incivility was rated by classroom incivility scale developed by Farrell, Provenzano, Spadafora, Marini, & Volk (2016). This instrument was rated using the Likert scale in which the statement items were favorable, and available with 5 answer choices (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). The validity of this instrument ranged from 0.02 to 0.01 while its reliability was at 0.813.

To collect the data, the authors conducted several procedures, namely managing the administrative permission to research the designated schools, determining classes to be used as the sample, and distributing the scales to be filled in by the students. After the scales were submitted, they were analyzed by using a hierarchical regression test to find out the relationship between moral disengagement, incivility classroom, students' social responsibility character controlled by gender, class, and age.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study found out that there was a relationship between social responsibility, moral disengagement, and classroom incivility when the demography variable acted as a control. It was proved by the results of hierarchical regression test showing that social responsibility had a relationship with moral disengagement with the value of $\Delta R=0.078$, while the aspect of moral disengagement variable which predicted the existence of the relationship was moral justification with the value of $\beta=0.095$, $t=2.105$, and $P<0.05$. Another aspect that predicted the relationship between responsibility and moral disengagement was the dehumanization aspect with the value of $\beta=-.099$, $t=-2,309$ and $P<0.05$. Additionally, classroom incivility was also found to influence responsibility variable with the value of delta $R=0.048$, while the aspect which predicted the relationship between classroom incivility and responsibility was intentional incivility aspect with the value of $\beta=-.165$, $t=-3,570$ and $P<0.01$. If it is thoroughly seen, moral disengagement and classroom incivility were related to responsibility by having $R=0.336$, $R^2=0.113$, $F=6,079$, and $P<0.01$. The details of these findings can be seen in the following Table 1.

Pre- Indicators	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	β	t	P	β	T	P	β	t	P
Class	.157	3.535	.000	.125	2.779	.006	.143	3.147	.002
Gender	-.140	-3.575	.000	-.137	-3.320	.001	-.128	-3.154	.002
Age	-.035	-.799	.425	-.012	-.272	.786	-.019	-.438	.661
Moral Disengagement									
Moral Justification				.074	1.622	.105	.095	2.105	.036
Euphemistic Labeling				-.119	-2.543	.011	-.075	-1.581	.114
Advantageous Comparison				-.043	-.924	.356	-.042	-.925	.355
Displacement Of Responsibility				.024	.512	.609	.030	.651	.516
Diffusion Of Responsibility				.059	1.311	.190	.060	1.364	.173
Distortion Of Consequences				0.00	-.010	.992	.017	.399	.690
Attribution Of Blame				-.004	-.080	.936	.006	.147	.883
Dehumanization				-.128	-2.968	.003	-.099	-2.309	.021
Incivility Classroom									
Unintentional Incivility							-.052	-1.126	.260
Intentional Incivility							-.165	-3.570	0.00
ΔR					0.078			0.048	
ΔR^2					0.039			0.030	
ΔP					0.01			0.00	
R		.210			0.288			.336	
R ²		.044			0.083			.113	
F		9.759			5.125			6.079	
P		0.00			0.00			0.00	

Table 1. The Results of Hierarchical Correlational Test

This study investigate the aspects of moral disengagement and classroom incivility which negatively predicted students' social responsibility. The findings confirmed that both moral disengagement and classroom incivility negatively predicted students' social responsibility. Based on theories, intimidation is the realization of low social responsibility (Gini et al., 2011). Therefore, it can be concluded that people whose social responsibility is high tend to concern about justice and care (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Meanwhile, classroom incivility can be in the form of intimidating friends, harassment, and threatening both friends and teachers (Burke et al., 2014). Intimidation is a manifestation of low social responsibility and has a relationship

with moral disengagement and classroom incivility. Interestingly, the study successfully confirmed that the aspects of moral disengagement which negatively predicted social responsibility were moral justification and dehumanization. Meanwhile, in terms of classroom incivility, the aspect which influenced this negative behavior was intentional incivility.

In this study, the aspects of moral disengagement which negatively predicted social responsibility were moral justification and dehumanization. In moral justification, students who had no social responsibility were those who considered an amoral action such as intimidating people is not a mistake. Meanwhile, the aspect of dehumanization was realized by students who did not practice social responsibility well or students who experienced a decline in social responsibility values. These findings strengthen the previous study results that the Diffusion of Responsibility significantly predicts intimidation practice by behaving unfairly in a group environment (Robson & Witenberg, 2013). Further, the influencing aspect of classroom incivility was intentional incivility. It was realized by students' intention in performing incivility, in this case, is intimidating others. Miller et al. (2014) revealed that students' incivility appears in some form of negative behaviors, such as disrupting the learning process and messing up classroom conduciveness.

The findings of this study are also in line with Knepp's (2012) that incivility is related to amoral behaviors by students, such as rejecting teacher's orders and ignoring rules, and moral disengagement which jointly influence students' characters, especially social responsibility. Therefore, in this study intimidating others were understood as an amoral act and bad social responsibility. As a result, students who intentionally intimidate others and consider their act not amoral can be said to have a bad social responsibility for the social environment.

Apart from its findings, this study had a limitation. The limitation was in the form of the limited data derived from two areas in Central Java, namely Semarang and Temanggung Regency. The researchers considered that these data did not represent the whole area in Central Java. Thus, future researchers should consider the areas of data collection, and apply classical guidance services to improve students' responsibility and decrease moral disengagement as well as classroom incivility.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study confirm that moral disengagement and incivility negatively predict students' social responsibility characters. The relationship between these two variables on social responsibility is negative, meaning that the higher level of moral disengagement and incivility owned by students would result in the lower social responsibility character. For more, moral justification and dehumanization in moral disengagement, and intentional incivility in classroom incivility are aspects which influence negative social responsibility. They further disrupt the learning process, and trigger students to intimidate class members. Even though this study has successfully explained the relationship between moral disengagement, incivility and social responsibility, there were some limitations found. First, the moral disengagement, incivility, and social responsibility in this study were examined correlatively. Also, this study was carried out only in junior high school level. Therefore, future studies are expected to employ a longitudinal study by using latent group modeling analysis or experimental design to reduce intimidating behavior either intentionally or unintentionally.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

The authors had participated in the research and approved the final manuscript.

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