

# An Effort to Mitigate Deviant Behaviour in the Workplace: Does Justice Matter?

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A salesperson is required to interact with internal companies and external parties. In this case, the customer. Several research studies rank salespersons among the most unethical professional jobs. This study is carried out on 312 salespersons through online surveys. The research found that the injustices felt by the salesperson are proven to significantly influence their deviant work behaviour. Furthermore, the existence of moral disengagement in the salesperson can also mediate the influence of organisational injustice on the deviant work of the behaviour, partially.

**Keywords:** *Salesperson, Organisational Justice, Deviant Work Behaviour, Moral Disengagement, Work Ethics.*

## Introduction

To work as a salesperson requires someone who is professional, competitive, hard-working and resistant to the pressure on the target work (Jelinek & Aharne, 2010; Brown & Peterson 1994; Krishnan, Netemeyer, & Boles, 2002). Salespersons are required to interact with internal companies and also external parties. In this case, the customer. In accordance with the survey carried out on the scope of work, the salesperson spent 30 per cent of his time meeting customers, 25 per cent of his time selling by telephone, and 67 per cent of his time serving customers (Mark, 1997). In connection with this scope of work, the company then provides supporting facilities in the form of transportation allowances (e.g. vehicles and fuel), telecommunications allowances (e.g. telephone and internet), as well as other facilities that are deemed necessary to support their work more optimally.

On the other hand, the results of the research conducted by the Sales & Marketing Management Equation show an astonishing phenomenon about the behaviour of the salesperson. It was stated in the study that 60 per cent of sales managers found that salespeople had manipulated sales expense reports and 47 per cent of sales managers suspected that salespeople in the company had lied when there were phone calls (Jelinek & Aharne, 2006; Strout, 2001). In addition, Gallup, a global consulting agency, ranks the most unethical professional jobs and the result is that salespeople are ranked first (Jelinek & Aharne, 2006; Collins 1995).

Misbehaviour, as in this phenomenon, in the world of academics is known as deviant workplace behaviour (DWB). DWB is the behaviour of employees who are considered to violate organisational norms and regulations that can affect the welfare of the organisation and its members (Robinson & Bennett, 2000). The existence of potential losses arising from deviant behaviour indicates that the behaviour must be minimised. One way is to find out the factors that can cause it. A factor suspected of influencing deviant behaviour is organisational justice. Organisational justice is important because justice is a strong determinant of one's behaviour in the organisation. Bies and Tripp (1996) state that deviant behaviour is a result of the low perception of justice in the organisation.

According to Adam (1963), employees often compare the benefits obtained with the sacrifices that have been given to the company. In addition, employees also hope that the rewards they receive are comparable to the rewards earned by other employees. According to Colquitt *et al.* (2011), if employees feel that the rewards given are fair, employees will feel satisfied with the reward. Employee satisfaction will be able to motivate employees to improve their performance. This is supported by Bandura's (2007) statement, which states that rewards can motivate employees to work. Research related to rewards refers to the concept we know today as distributive justice (Pareke, 2002). It is found that if employees feel there is distributive justice, employees tend to provide positive reactions such as satisfaction and commitment. Conversely, injustice in the distribution of rewards from the organisation will encourage employees to take deviant actions, such as acts of damaging equipment or work processes, taking equipment without permission and so on.

In linking organisational injustice perceived by employees with deviant work behaviour, Hystad *et al.* (2014) use moral disengagement as a mediating variable. Hystad *et al.* (2014) used social-cognitive theory as the basis of his research. Socio-cognitive theory explains that human behaviour is controlled by thoughts that are influenced by the processes of self-regulation and the social environment in which individuals are located. Self-regulation is the tendency of individuals to accept existing norms and regulations as a consideration in shaping their behaviour. According to social-cognitive theory, someone with a good self-regulation system tends to do something based on internal moral standards. This standard leads to good

behaviour because individuals use their personal standards to anticipate, monitor and assess their own actions. In other words, self-regulation can be understood as individual compliance with existing rules (Bandura, 1996).

Self-compliance with regulations, also known as self-regulation, can be activated as desired. Moral disengagement is a person's desire to deactivate self-compliance with regulations so that someone does not want to behave well and tends to behave immorally. Through moral disengagement, individuals free themselves from the guilt that occurs when their behaviour violates the rules, and finally, they make immoral decisions. So, the moral disengagement in this research is the compliance of a person in a regulation that is in an inactive condition, so that the individual acts unethically with the support of the cognitive, affective and environmental aspects he feels.

Based on the previous explanation, this research looked at the gap between the phenomena that occurred about the salesperson's behaviour, which was considered as many deviant acts in the workplace. However, on the other hand, there was not much research on deviant workplace behaviour in the salesperson. Therefore, this study will examine the effect of organisational justice and salesperson deviant work behaviour, mediated by moral disengagement. Researchers want to examine more deeply the influence of each dimension of organisational justice on salesperson deviant work behaviour by mediating moral disengagement.

## **Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

### ***The Relationship between Organisational Injustice and Moral Disengagement***

Distributive justice refers to an assessment of corporate justice through the outcomes obtained by employees. The equality of outcomes received by employees with contributions given to companies can have a negative influence on employee moral disengagement (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). Based on the equity theory, an outcome allocation that is not equivalent to the sacrifice and contribution of employees to the company, is assumed to make employees feel used and not cared for by the company's welfare (Adam, 1965). Thus, employees will feel that they do not need to obey the norms and regulations that apply in determining their behaviour because the contribution given to the company is not equivalent to the outcome received (Hystad, *et al.*, 2014).

Procedural justice reflects the fairness of the decision-making process (Greenberg, 1997). Greenberg added that procedural justice is also a level of fairness and honesty of the processes and procedures used by the organisation to make and allocate a decision. When employees are given control to be able to contribute opinions or ideas in a decision-making

process, it will have a negative influence on employee moral disengagement (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). Injustice in the decision-making process can make employees feel unappreciated because they are not given the right to speak out by the company. Thus, employees feel they do not need to obey the norms and regulations that apply in determining their behaviour (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). Agreeing with Hystad, Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara (2010), in his research, also stated that poor perceptions of procedural justice resulted in moral disengagement. Perception is what makes a person deactively regulate himself to always obey the rules.

Interpersonal justice reflects the extent to which employees are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect by company management (Greenberg, 1990; Colquitt *et al.*, 2011). Management treatment for employees can have a negative influence on employee moral disengagement (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). According to the social exchange theory, it states that in an interaction with others, one will think about what he has given to a relationship and what has been obtained in the relationship to pay for what he has given before (Blau, 1964). Exchange in these interactions is not only limited to material (Foa, 1975). Attention is a social thing that is also exchanged in this interaction (Lim, 2002). Impolite treatment, not being dignified and not respecting employees, can make employees feel unappreciated and assess that the company does not have good ethics and morals. Thus, employees feel they do not need to obey the norms and regulations that apply to companies because they are unethical and immoral in treating employees (Hystad *et al.*, 2014).

Informational justice reflects the extent to which information is provided in the procedure and the results of decision-making (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). Employees are entitled to receive explanations from superiors, while leaders must provide explanations that are the basis for decision-making. Providing sufficient information and a good management explanation about the use of procedures for certain decision-making can have a negative influence on employee moral disengagement (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). A lack of information, poor explanations and not being open in decision-making can make employees feel that they are not considered by the company and/or are not part of the company. Employees feel there is no need to obey the norms and regulations that apply in determining their behaviour because employees feel they are not part of the company. On the other hand, employees who are given sufficient information and reasonable, updated, specific and open explanations about a decision-making process, will have adherence to company regulations because employees feel they are part of the company and will feel guilty if doing things that can harm the company and its members. Based on the above discussion, it can be hypothesised that:

**H1:** Organisational injustice has a positive effect on moral disengagement.



### ***The Relationship between Organisational Injustice and Salesperson Deviant Work Behaviour***

Distributive justice refers to an assessment of corporate justice through the outcomes obtained by employees. The outcome equality received by employees with contributions given to the company, can have a negative influence on the deviant work behaviour of employees (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). Based on the theory of social exchange, allocation outcomes that are not equivalent to sacrifice and employee contributions to the company, are assumed to make employees feel unappreciated and not cared for by the company (Adam, 1965). Thus, employees will carry out negative actions and deviate from prevailing norms and regulations (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001).

When workers feel treated unfairly, they will react by doing deviant work behaviour. When discussing the relationship between organisational justice and deviant work behaviour, of course, it will be questioned whether the relationship also applies to the salesperson. The salesperson carries the perception of justice that he receives in interacting with customers (Jelinek, 2006). Jelinek added that the salesperson who felt that he was not treated fairly by his organisation would vent his anger at the customer. In addition, they will also express complaints against companies to outsiders.

Procedural justice reflects the fairness of the decision-making process (Greenberg, 1997). Greenberg added that procedural justice is also a level of fairness and honesty of the processes and procedures used by the organisation to make and allocate a decision. Justice in the decision-making process can have a negative influence on the deviant work behaviour of employees (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). Injustice in the decision-making process is assumed to make employees feel unappreciated and not provided voice rights by the company. Thus, employees behave negatively and deviate from company regulations (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). On the other hand, employees who can play a role in the decision-making process will avoid behaviour that deviates from company rules because they feel they are part of the company. In research conducted by Jelinek (2006), it shows that there is a relationship between procedural justice and salesperson deviant work behaviour. A salesperson who feels that he is not being treated fairly by his organisation will vent his anger at the customer. In addition, they will also express complaints against companies to outsiders.

Interpersonal justice reflects the extent to which employees are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect by management (Greenberg, 1990; Colquitt *et al.*, 2011). According to Jeanne (2017), there is a negative relationship between interpersonal justice and deviant work behaviour. When someone feels they are treated badly and unfairly, they will feel angry, which motivates taking actions such as verbal aggression, sabotage and theft. Impolite treatment, not being dignified and not respecting employees, can make employees feel

unappreciated and assess that the company does not have good ethics and morals. Thus, employees tend to act negatively and deviate from company regulations (Colquitt *et al.*, 2014).

Informational justice reflects the extent to which information is provided in the procedure and the results of Colquitt's (2001) decision-making. Colquitt added that employees are entitled to receive explanations from superiors, while leaders must provide explanations that are the basis for decision-making. Providing sufficient information and a good management explanation about the use of procedures for certain decision-making can have a negative influence on the deviant work behaviour of employees (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). Providing insufficient and transparent information can make employees feel that they are not considered by the company and are not part of the company. Thus, employees tend to act negatively and deviate from company regulations (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). On the other hand, employees who are given sufficient, reasonable, updated, specific and open information will avoid behaviour that deviates from company regulations because employees feel they are part of the company. From the abovementioned, it can be hypothesised that:

**H2:** Organisational injustice has a positive effect on salesperson deviant work behaviour

### ***The Relationship between Moral Disengagement and Salesperson Deviant Work Behaviour***

Moral disengagement reflects a person's tendency not to consider the norms and regulations that apply as a basis for determining their behaviour (Bandura *et al.*, 1996). In other words, moral disengagement shows employee disobedience to prevailing norms and regulations (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). The tendency of a person to not consider the norms and regulations that apply as a basis for determining the behaviour he does, can have a positive influence on the deviant work behaviour of employees (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). The tendency to not consider norms and regulations in determining behaviour can make employees feel free from moral ties. This causes employees to feel free from moral sanctions if employees act negatively and deviate from company regulations (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). On the other hand, employees who tend to consider the norms and regulations in determining their behaviour will feel bound to moral ties. Thus, that makes employees feel a moral burden if they do deviant actions.

**H3:** Moral disengagement has a positive effect on salesperson deviant work behaviour

### ***Relationship between Moral Disengagement, Organisational Injustice and Deviant Work Behaviour***

Moral disengagement reflects an individual's disobedience to prevailing morals and regulations. There is a significant relationship between organisational justice and deviant work behaviour, mediated by moral disengagement. In social-cognitive theory, according to Bandura (1996), individual behaviour is described by a reciprocal relationship between the three individual elements of internal factors (cognitive, affective, biological), environmental conditions and the behaviour of those around. In the context of this study, it will explain that employee behaviour is influenced by employee cognitive factors. The employee's cognitive factors are influenced by the company's environment, related to the justice received by the employee. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between organisational justice and deviant work behaviour which is mediated by moral disengagement. This is in accordance with the opinion of Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara (2010), which states that there is a relationship between the perception of organisational justice and deviant work behaviour and the relationship obtained through moral disengagement.

The perception of organisational justice directs employees' thinking that formal regulations cannot be violated so employees will tend to behave well and not violate regulations. Hystad *et al.* (2014) describes moral disengagement as a form of human thought that ignores the moral in determining the behaviour that is done and can influence employees to conduct deviant behaviour from company regulations. Employees' thinking in considering morals as the basis for determining the behaviour carried out is influenced by unfair environmental conditions in the company. Furthermore, Hystad *et al.* (2014) make moral disengagement a mechanism that bridges environmental conditions related to organisational justice with deviant behaviour from company security regulations. Employees who feel that they do not receive fair treatment from the company will free themselves from moral ties and not consider the rules in determining their behaviour. As a result, employees feel they have no moral burden when they break the rules and it makes them deviate easily. Based on these arguments, our next hypothesis is:

**H4:** Moral disengagement mediates the relationship between organisational injustice and salesperson deviant work behaviour.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research Design***

We used online surveys as the main procedure to collect the data for this research. This research takes respondents who are salespersons in the distribution of consumer goods

companies. For confidentiality, the names of the organisations and respondents are kept anonymous. At the initial stage of this research, we conducted the pilot-interview with five salespersons to capture the deviant work behaviour phenomenon in the distribution company. Cases of layoffs caused by deviant behaviour committed by salespersons consist of three types, where the majority of cases are fraud cases. Cheating actions can be exemplified, such as stock fraud and manipulating data expenses intended for a salesperson to carry out selling activities, such as gasoline money. Then, the second most common case is a procedure violation, such as sales overpass areas where salespersons violate their sales area to other salesperson areas, being absent from work, giving credit purchases to consumers without the supervisor's knowledge to achieve sales targets. Furthermore, cases that have occurred several times are criminalisation and drug uses.

It is possible that the respondent did not want to answer questions or lie in answering questions that could cause bias in this study, because the topic was sensitive. To anticipate, we do the following: 1) Be careful in composing words to reduce a respondent's anxiety; 2) Give written emphasis that the survey will not endanger his career; 3) In answering surveys, objects can hide their true identities; and 4) Data retrieval is done by web surveys. According to Kreuter (2008), web surveys can increase the desire to answer sensitive questions. The answers obtained from the web survey are also considered more accurate.

### ***Measures***

The measurement of organisational injustice was adopted from the research of James *et al.* (2013), which was based on the research of Colquitt (2001), and Price and Mueller (1986), which was adjusted back to the context of the object of this research. *Salesperson organisational injustice* deals with injustice towards employees and consists of various aspects. It includes economic aspects in the form of outcomes obtained and procedures used for decision-making related to outcomes; interpersonal aspects in the form of how they are treated by superiors and organisations; and aspects of information in the form of justice to get the information needed. The sample item includes: "The company is unfair in providing rewards compared to your responsibilities as a salesperson".

*Moral disengagement* is a condition in which a person is no longer engaged in a held moral value so that he no longer feels guilty when taking an immoral act. The measurement of moral disengagement in this study was adopted from the Barsky (2011) study, which was based on the research of Bandura (1996). The sample item includes: "You think exaggerating the quality of products sold to consumers can be justified to achieve sales targets". All items on *salesperson organisation injustice* and *moral disengagement* were measured using the five-point Likert scale with 1 (one) for strongly disagree to 5 (five) for strongly agree.

*Salesperson deviant work behaviour* is a behaviour that violates the prevailing norms and can harm an organisation and its members or both, by a salesperson. According to Jelinek (2006), salesperson deviant work behaviour is measured by the three following dimensions: deviant organisational behaviour, deviant interpersonal behaviour and deviant frontline behaviour. *Deviant organisational behaviour* is a behaviour that violates the norms or rules aimed at the company (e.g. I have changed the receipt of the costs that the company will cover). Secondly, *deviant interpersonal behaviour* is a behaviour that violates the norms or rules aimed at people who are inside the company (e.g. I once said harshly to my co-workers). *Deviant frontline behaviour* is a behaviour that violates the norms or rules aimed at consumers (e.g. I once told the company's ugliness to people outside the company).

### **Population and Sample**

In this study, the target population is a salesperson in a company that has a business scope in the distribution of consumer goods. This is because sales are their core business and it is important for them to make policies related to the sales division to improve it. We distributed 344 online questionnaires to salespersons in several companies. We deployed an online survey to the salespersons' email addresses. Only 312 questionnaires were returned and can be continued for the next process.

### **Result**

**Table 1:** Discriminant Validity Result

RAVE	DFB	DIB	DOB	DR	DI	IcI	IpI	MJ	PI	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
DFB	0.903									0.815
DIB	0.915	0.881								0.776
DOB	0.908	0.927	0.901							0.812
DR	0.679	0.748	0.757	0.859						0.739
DI	0.529	0.581	0.587	0.705	0.917					0.840
IcI	0.608	0.658	0.663	0.641	0.746	0.880				0.775
IpII	0.627	0.659	0.674	0.652	0.728	0.905	0.911			0.831
MJ_	0.533	0.634	0.634	0.816	0.694	0.579	0.581	0.902		0.813
PI	0.597	0.639	0.644	0.708	0.859	0.868	0.846	0.697	0.837	0.700

In Table 1, it can be seen that each RAVE construct variable is greater than any correlation between constructs. This shows that the measurement indicator of a construct variable cannot explain the other variables. Besides seeing RAVE, the AVE value can also be a requirement

that discriminant validity can be achieved. The minimum AVE value for stating that discriminant validity has been reached is 0.50. The AVE value below 0.50 indicates that the indicator has a higher average error rate. In Table 4.10, we can know the AVE value of each construct variable that is greater than 0.5. This indicates that the indicator has a low average error rate.

**Table 2:** Composite Reliability Result

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Deviant Frontline Behaviour	0.943	0.957	0.815
Deviant Interpersonal Behaviour	0.928	0.946	0.776
Deviant Organisational Behaviour	0.954	0.963	0.812
Deviant Working Behaviour	0.979	0.980	0.757
Displacement of Responsibility	0.823	0.894	0.739
Distributive Injustice	0.952	0.963	0.840
Interactional Injustice	0.927	0.945	0.775
Interpersonal Injustice	0.898	0.936	0.831
Moral Justification	0.885	0.929	0.813
Moral Disengagement	0.916	0.934	0.704
Organisational Injustice	0.972	0.974	0.678
Procedural Injustice	0.893	0.921	0.700

In Table 2, all the research variables show composite reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) > 0.8 and average variance error (AVE) > 0.5 and Cornbach's alpha > 0.7. This shows that the item question on all research variables has consistency in measuring each variable in a different time and place. In other words, all research variables can be said to be reliable and can be used in the research model.

**Table 3:** Structural Model Result

			<i>Path Coef.</i>	t-value	p
OI	→	MD	0.746	21.341	0.000**
OI	→	DWB	0.328	4.573	0.000**
MD	→	DWB	0.478	5.997	0.000**
$R_1^2$	<i>Moral Disengagement</i>		0.557	$Q^2$	0.8097
$R_2^2$	<i>Deviant Work Behaviour</i>		0.570		

Note: \*\* sig < 0,05

## Discussion and Implication

### *Organisational Injustice, Moral Disengagement, and Salesperson Deviant Work Behaviour*

Based on the results of the study, organisational injustice can have a positive significance to moral disengagement. This suggests that the more injustice the company carries out on the salesperson, it can make the salesperson's attachment to the value of moral values held diminished, so as not to feel guilty when performing immoral acts. These results are in line with the results of Hystad *et al.* (2014), which demonstrates how unfairness towards the employees have made them reluctant to be bound by the values and norms that apply because they are treated unfairly.

In this study, some salespersons tried to justify unethical actions such as lying and neglecting customers, exaggerating the quality of products being sold and doing sales overpasses in order to achieve sales targets. This is based on the consideration of the salesperson who judges the company unjustly in providing salaries and bonuses compared to the sales target demanded by the company. Additionally, salespersons are also rarely invited to discuss and hear to select the sales area and the amount of the bonuses to be acquired. It makes the salesperson feel unheard and treated unfairly within the company. The salesperson who is then treated unfairly ignores the existing morals to say honestly to the customer and follow the appropriate sales rules in their respective areas by justifying unethical actions to achieve sales targets. This is similar to Saidon *et al.* (2010), stating that the unfair retribution received by employees and the poor ethical climate within the organisation, can increase the inclination of employees to be reluctant to be bound by the morals and regulations that apply to the company. This is because employees only feel utilised and do not understand the needs of employees. In addition, Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara (2010) also argues that companies that do not provide opportunities and fairness to their employees to participate in decision-making will judge the decisions taken by unauthorised companies, so that they feel unnecessary to be bound by regulations.

Based on social cognitive theory, moral disengagement can occur due to the reciprocal relationship between individual conditions and environmental conditions and the behaviour of both parties (Bandura, 1999). This theory supports the results of this study which explains that the condition of the company's environment that is unfair in providing fair returns to them, can cause salespersons to be reluctant to be bound by the moral ties that apply to the company by trying to justify unethical actions to achieve sales targets. Individual factors have not been considered in this study, but these factors still have a large influence on the process of moral disengagement. Detert *et al.* (2008) and McAlister (2001) found that individual

differences in demographics and personalities can influence employees' thinking about moral disengagement.

According to the research results, organisational injustice can have a positive and significant effect on deviant work behaviour. This shows that the injustice committed by the company to the salesperson can increase the deviant behaviour which can harm the organisation, work colleagues and customers because the salesperson feels disadvantaged, not heard and enforced unethically at work. According to Kashyap *et al.* (2007), salespersons who are treated unfairly in receiving rewards and making decisions will try to seek personal gain in sales by trying to justify any means to achieve sales targets, even though they have to behave unethically, such as embezzling reports, tricking customers and taking prospective co-workers. This is also in line with the opinion of Jelinek (2006) about deviant actions made by salesmen due to unfair treatment. Namely, the salesperson who feels he is not being treated fairly by his organisation will vent his anger at the customer. In addition, salespersons who are unfairly treated will also express complaints about the company to outsiders such as customers, co-workers and competitors (Jelinek, 2006).

Thus, in line with the theory concept of deviant work behaviour developed by Colquitt *et al.* (2001), which states that if someone feels that he has been received unfairly and not as expected, the employee will act negatively and deviate from the norms and regulations that can harm the company and its co-workers. Jeanne (2017) also states the same thing, where there is a positive relationship between organisational injustice and deviant work behaviour, when a person feels unfairly treated, it will make the person angry and motivate them to do adverse actions such as verbal aggression, sabotage and theft.

Moral disengagement can have a positive and significant effect on deviant work behaviour. This means a salesperson is unafraid to do deviant behaviour because the salesperson is convinced that his actions can be justified to reach the sales target. The results of this study are supported by the opinion of Hystad *et al.* (2014), which states that the tendency of someone who is reluctant to be bound by the norms and regulations that apply to the organisation can give encouragement to someone to behave defiantly. This is also in line with the opinion of Bandura *et al.* (1999), which states that someone who justifies unethical actions will not feel a moral burden when carrying out such unethical actions, so that the individual can carry out deviant actions continuously and without fear or guilt.

Basically, moral disengagement reflects a person's tendency not to consider the norms and regulations that apply as a basis in determining the behaviour he does (Bandura *et al.*, 1996). In other words, moral disengagement shows a person's non-compliance with prevailing norms and regulations (Hystad *et al.*, 2014). Normally, someone who tends to consider norms and regulations in determining his behaviour will feel bound to morals, making employees

feel a moral burden if they commit deviant actions. In the social cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1999), the moral disengagement that is believed by a person can be realised with deviant behaviour from the moral as a manifestation of the response of the environmental conditions that affect him. Thus, someone who has experienced moral disengagement will realise his actions with deviant behaviour, as a form of reaction from his social environment.

### ***Moral Disengagement as Mediation between Organisational Injustice and Salesperson Deviant Work Behaviour***

In this research model, the direct effect of organisational injustice on deviant work behaviour is compared to indirect influence through the mediation of moral disengagement. The results of this study indicate organisational injustice can have a direct effect on the deviant work behaviour where it shows that moral disengagement acts as a partial mediation that can link the influence of organisational injustice with deviant behaviour. The results of this study are in line with the research of Hystad *et al.* (2014), which shows that moral disengagement can mediate the influence of organisational injustice with the deviant work behaviour partially. In particular, where employees who are unfairly treated will experience a reluctance to be bound by the prevailing moral by throwing responsibility for bad actions on a higher authority and blurring the consequences of the action for all employees who work. The difference with this study, moral disengagement developed by Bandura (1999) on salesmen is more often done in the form of moral justification where salesmen often justify unethical behaviour, such as lying and tricking customers and overpassing to salespeople's selling areas, only to achieve targets determined by the company. Justification for this unethical action encourages salesmen not to be afraid to perform deviant work behaviours that can ultimately harm customers and companies later.

The concept of mediation is based on social cognitive theory which states that individuals and the environment have a strong reciprocal relationship where both parties influence each other's behaviour (Bandura *et al.*, 1999). Bandura *et al.* (1999) state that cognitive processes are carried out by individuals to respond to what is received by their environment. If the environment does not treat individuals fairly and well, the thought of individuals will be reluctant to be bound by the morals upheld by their environment because they consider it morally and the regulation does not legitimate and is not good for him. The manifestation of unwillingness to be bound to morality prevents individuals from being afraid of committing deviant behaviour from morals and regulations because there is no guilt and moral burden because these deviant acts are considered right. This cognitive theory social concept is also proven in the research of Hystad *et al.* (2014), who found that moral disengagement is the basis of employee thinking that connects the injustices done by the organisational environment to employees with deviant behaviour by these employees. Hystad *et al.* (2014) used the concept of diffusion of responsibility in the process of employee moral



disengagement where the consequences of deviant behaviour were borne by all employees, so an individual did not feel burdened with severe consequences due to the deviant behaviour he did.

In this study, the basis of moral justification and the displacement of responsibility is based on the salesperson feeling pressured and justifying any means to achieve the sales target, as a company. In addition, salesmen do not use the concept of diffusion of responsibility because the performance indicators of salesmen are seen from each individual and not in a group, so the consequences of deviant behaviour will be towards salesmen who behave defiantly. Thus, it can be seen that moral disengagement can also be a mechanism for deviant behaviour due to the injustices felt by salesmen by using the moral justification mindset and displacement of responsibility.

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