

The **Neurodivergent Scale for Interacting with Robots (NSIR)** (Sadownik, 2025) and the **Moral Disengagement Scale** (Bandura et al., 1996) represent two different psychological frameworks: one focusing on the **facilitation of social connection** through technology, and the other on the **justification of antisocial behavior** through cognitive restructuring.

While they address different behaviors, the NSIR relates to the Moral Disengagement Scale (MDS) through the following thematic connections:

1. Contrast in Social Agency (Prosocial vs. Antisocial)

- **Moral Disengagement Scale:** This scale measures the psychological mechanisms (e.g., moral justification, dehumanization) that allow individuals to commit harmful acts against others without feeling guilt. It is a strong predictor of **aggression** and **bullying**.
- **NSIR:** In contrast, the NSIR measures **Social Comfort, Trust, and Kinship**. It focuses on how neurodivergent individuals find "safe" social interaction with robots, which may serve as a prosocial alternative for individuals who struggle with the social pressures that often lead to or stem from moral disengagement in human-to-human contexts.

2. The Role of "Dehumanization" vs. "Anthropomorphism"

The two scales sit on opposite sides of how we "humanize" or "dehumanize" social actors:

- **MDS (Dehumanization):** One of Bandura's eight mechanisms is **dehumanization**, which involves stripping a human victim of their qualities to make harming them easier.
- **NSIR (Anthropomorphic Connection):** The NSIR measures the reverse—the tendency to **anthropomorphize** robots and feel a "kinship" with them. Item 1 (*"The robot is more like me than anyone else I know"*) and Item 5 (*"My robot can tell what I am feeling"*) demonstrate a deep personal connection that contradicts the detachment seen in moral disengagement.

3. Safety and Judgment-Free Interaction

Bandura's theory suggests that people morally disengage to protect their "positive self-regard" while acting harmfully. The NSIR suggests that robots offer a space where such self-regard is never threatened:

- **NSIR Social Safety:** Items like *"I feel comfortable undressing in front of my robot"* (Item 7) and *"I believe that my robot is the same with me as it is with anyone"* (Item 8) point toward a environment of **radical trust and lack of judgment**.
- **Application:** While high moral disengagement scores are linked to **lower empathy** and higher aggression, the NSIR aims to measure a domain where neurodivergent individuals can practice social interaction and "share thinking" (Item 3) without the fear of the social "shame" that often precedes moral disengagement in human peer groups.

Comparison Summary

Feature	Moral Disengagement Scale (Bandura et al., 1996)	NSIR (Sadownik, 2025)
Focus	Justifying harm and antisocial conduct.	Building trust and social comfort.
Mechanism	Cognitive restructuring to bypass self-sanctions.	Anthropomorphic connection and kinship.
Target	Human "others" (often victims of bullying).	Robotic social agents.
Outcome	Reduced guilt/shame for negative actions.	Increased sense of safety and mutual feeling.