Child attachment in Dual Career Family

Miaphul Jannah1*

1STAI DR.KHEZ.Muttaqien, Indonesia
*jannahmiaphul92@gmail.com

Abstract
Attachment is a strong relationship between a child and his mother or caregiver that makes both of them feel satisfaction and pleasure. Experience of establishing attachment continuously will determine how children interact with their environment in the future and tend to persist throughout their life span. Attachment is formed starting from the family environment. This research aims to describe the attachment of children in dual-career families. The method in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection was carried out by observing and interviewing parents and caregivers in dual-career families. The material obtained was analyzed with thematic analysis technique. The results have shown that there were differences in the attachments of children in dual-career families, including secure attachment, ambivalent attachment, and avoidant attachment. Different attachment patterns are shown because of the varied sample characteristics, where the samples have different parenting styles and family backgrounds. Children who make their mother an attached figure with a democratic parenting style can build a secure attachment for the child. Meanwhile, children who make someone other than their mother as attachment figure with a permissive and authoritarian parenting style causes the build of insecure attachments, namely ambivalent and avoidant attachments.

Key words: Child's Attachment, Dual Career Families.

Introduction
Attachment is a special behaviour in humans, namely the tendency and desire of a person to seek closeness with another person and seek satisfaction in a relationship with that person. Attachment experience will create an 'internal working models', namely life-long templates. This means that the experience of establishing attachment continuously will determine how children interact with their environment in the future and tend to persist throughout their life span. The first year of childbirth is a sensitive period in the development of attachment. This is in accordance with Erikson's opinion (Santrock, 2007) that the first year of a child's life will experience stages of development in the form of trust versus distrust. These stages will be the basis of the form of attachment to the child. Parenting sensitivity and physical comfort will form the basis of basic trust in children. So that the child will make the caregiver who provides comfort as a secure attachment figure. The family is the smallest social environment where the baby's life needs are completely dependent, especially on the mother. Attachment relationships develop through the infant's experiences with the mother in the early years of life. For example, when a child feels uncomfortable, such as being afraid of strangers, the child needs the mother's protection. This high level of attachment makes their interactions...
very intensive. This emotional attachment is called attachment, namely the close relationship between the child and the mother.

Every child will experience a stage of attachment which can be done not only to the mother but also to anyone who is considered a figure who can create a sense of security and comfort in the child, for example, a grandmother or babysitter. But the mother has the biggest role as a regular caregiver. Religion also views that mothers are responsible for their children, educate them with the right education, pay attention to health, and make children feel their mother’s love. It is appropriate that the figure who can provide comfort to the child is the mother. But the opposite condition we often encounter in everyday life. There are mothers who do not meet their needs both physically and psychologically because they are busy working. In such conditions, the physical and psychological contact between mother and child becomes empty, so it is the figure of a nanny (Baby Sitter) who becomes the foundation of the child. Regardless of all the conditions that are experienced between the child and the mother, the child still needs an attachment figure to meet his physical and psychological needs. Therefore, there are many cases where children do not make their parents (especially mothers) a secure attachment figure.

Several researchers have focused on the profile of parenting models in dual-career families. The limited research on child attachment from the perspective of parenting style and its impact on children’s psychosocial development has made researchers interested in conducting research on child attachment in dual-career families. Therefore, this study focuses on parenting styles in dual-career families and forms of child attachment seen from their psychosocial development.

**Method**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with thematic analysis. The first step of this research is to collect and study literature both from books and journals related to the research topic. Before conducting research, researchers search for individuals who can and are appropriate for research samples. After finding samples, researchers build a good rapport and conduct interviews and observations. After completing interviewing all samples, all data has been collected directly written or copied verbatim from the interview. Then the data are all classified, analyzed and described. In the final stage of the research, all research results have been completed and analyzed. Then the researcher presents the results of the research, where ready to be reported and accounted for. The thematic analysis can be seen in figure 1.

![Figure 1. Thematic Analysis](image)

The research population is dual-career families. The sample in this study was selected using a purposive sampling technique, with respondents coming from 4 families, including children, parents and caregivers. The selected sample criteria are early childhood from dual-career families. In more detail, the sample can be seen in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Parents job</th>
<th>Caregiver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Family 1</td>
<td>6 years old</td>
<td>office worker</td>
<td>baby sitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Family 2</td>
<td>5 years old</td>
<td>civil servant</td>
<td>baby sitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Family 3</td>
<td>6 years old</td>
<td>civil servant</td>
<td>grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Family 4</td>
<td>3 years old</td>
<td>lecturer</td>
<td>grandmother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The process of collecting data in research uses instruments as a guide in observing and interviewing respondents. The instruments are in the form of interview sheets and observation sheets, which are made based on the theoretical construct of child attachment. In detail, the theoretical construction can be seen in figure 2, which is used as the basis for the development of interview and observation instruments.
Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews and observation. The data analysis technique used is a thematic analysis, namely an analysis technique that focuses on compiling coding based on predetermined research questions so that the themes are arranged in accordance with the research questions and become a frame of reference in explaining the phenomena that occur.

Results and Discussion

Attachment is an emotional relationship or an affective relationship between one individual and another individual that has a special meaning. The relationship that is built will last long enough and provide a sense of security even though the attached figure is not visible in the child's view. The 2 types of attachments (Ainsworth in Bretherton) are secure attachments and insecure attachments. First, a secure attachment will occur if the mother responds to all the child's needs properly and lovingly. If children live in harmony with their families, children will easily develop a sense of belonging and trust in others. Children get a lot of experience from the environment around them. It also helps children to learn to develop social skills such as empathy, emotional sensitivity, and learn to understand what other people want from them. Second, insecure attachment. This type of attachment is a child's attachment to an attached figure who does not understand the child's psychological needs. Children are raised by attachment figures who do not respond or respond poorly to their needs. Insecure includes 2 forms of attachment, namely ambivalent attachment and avoidant attachment. The characteristic of ambivalent attachment, children try to get attention by annoying, influencing and threatening other people, increasing resistance behaviour to stressful conditions, and becoming angry because the caregiver does not provide comfort. And the characteristic of avoidant attachment, children avoid emotional closeness and dependence, do not show feelings of need and keep their emotions; children always do things according to what their parents or caregivers want so they don’t get angry.

The results of the data analysis showed that. First, a secure attachment pattern can be formed if an attached figure in relation to the child shows sensitivity, positive attitude, support, creates activities that are carried out together, synchrony, and often involves the child in communication and activities. When parents (mothers) are sensitive, responsive, accepting and attentive to a child's behavioural rhythms and individuality, they develop a form of secure attachment between parent (mother) and child. Second, children who are cared for by a babysitter have an ambivalent attachment type. Mother is not an attached figure for children. Parents are not responsive to the needs and signals given by the child, do not involve the child in communication and activities, do not show love and pay little attention to the rhythm of the child's behaviour and his individuality, and are ineffective in giving attention and rules. It makes children always try to get attention by annoying and threatening others, unable to express emotions in a good way, unable to follow the rules, and able to develop good social relationships with others. Third, the avoidant attachment type is formed in children who are cared for by grandparents. Grandfather becomes an attached figure for children. Children feel uncomfortable and insecure with their parents. Parents do not support what the child wants, always dictate and do not give freedom of initiative, get angry easily when children show wrong behaviour, and give children a bad self-concept. Not responsive to the needs and signals given by the child, does not show love and pays little attention to the rhythm of the child's behaviour and his individuality. His attached figure is his grandfather. This causes the children to avoid emotional closeness and dependence, not show feelings of need and keep their emotions; children always do things according to what their parents or caregivers want so they don’t get angry. Children are not confident to explore the environment, are not used to expressions of love, are less able to overcome fear and anxiety and have difficulty starting social interactions with new people.
Ainsworth classifies attachment into three specific categories: secure, insecure (avoidance), and insecure (hold-ambivalent). Securely attached infants show sadness at being separated from their parents and are happy to be reunited with their parents and return to the spirit of exploration. Avoidant infants do not cry when they are separated and avoid their parents when they are reunited without showing anger. In resisting/ambivalent infants, attachment and acknowledgement are preoccupied with parents, sometimes appear angry unsettled on the reunion, and usually continue their focus on their parents, and cry frequently (Seligman, 2018). Based on the data in Charts 3–6, it can be seen that there were differences in the attachments of children in dual-career families, including secure attachment, ambivalent attachment, and avoidant attachment. Two (2) children have ambivalent attachment. Children try to get attention by annoying and threatening others, increase the behaviour of resistance to stress conditions, get angry because the caregiver does not provide comfort, sometimes show empathy, unable to express love, unable to express emotions in a good way, unable to follow rules, and able to develop good social relationships with others. One (1) child has avoidant attachment. Children feel uncomfortable and insecure with their parents. Children avoid emotional closeness and dependence, do not show feelings of need and keep their emotions; children always do things according to what their parents or caregivers want so they don’t get angry. Children are not confident to explore the environment, are not used to expressions of love but have a high sense of empathy, are less able to overcome fear and anxiety, and have difficulty starting social interactions with new people. Hughes (2018) argue that when the parent’s reaction to the child is one of anger, fear, or rejection, the child is very likely to avoid intersubjective
experiences since they are likely to elicit a great deal of terror and shame. Her resultant sense of self is likely to be very negative as well as very incoherent, and she is not likely to be able to learn about herself, others, events, and objects in the mind and heart of her parents. Furthermore, one (1) child has a secure attachment. Children are always cheerful and confident, enthusiastic about exploring the environment, showing empathy, expressing love, able to overcome fear and anxiety, able to express emotions in a good way, and able to develop good social relationships with others. The affective bond of infant to parent plays a pivotal role in the regulation of stress in times of distress, anxiety or illness (IJzendoornIjzen, 2019).

Attachment is important as the basis of children's psychosocial development. But not all parents realize the importance of this attachment variable for the psychological development of children. Secure attachment will have a positive influence on the child's further development. According to Ainsworth (in Santrock), attachment that is secure or fulfilled in the first years of life will provide an important foundation for later psychological development in a child's life. Meanwhile, children who are in a state of insecure attachment do not get a harmonious relationship. Children still have an attachment to someone, but the child's psychological needs are not met properly, so children will have difficulty developing their social abilities. Children with insecure attachments are at risk for experiencing developmental deviations, for example, when a child whines, asking to be on the lap of an attached figure, but the attached figure quickly rejects it. This makes the child disappointed and creates fear or inferiority for the child to do other attachment behaviours. According to Fahlberg (in Atwool), attachment can help children to develop intellectual
potential, think logically, develop empathy, make children confident, overcome stress and frustration, be able to overcome fears and worries, develop further relationships, and reduce jealousy.

The attached figure is a person who is chosen by the child as an attached object. Children will always want to be close to their attached figures. This can be seen when children feel happy, excited or in a comfortable state, attached figures are used as friends to share joy. Meanwhile, if the situation experienced by the child is uncomfortable, for example, the child is in a state of fear; then the attached figure is used as a place of refuge. The attached figures are not only mothers but also fathers, caregivers (babysitters) or grandmothers depending on whom the baby feels comfortable with. Based on the results of the study, it was found that the dominance of children in dual-career families did not make parents (especially mothers) as attached figures. First, in subjects 1 and 2, there are parents with a permissive parenting style. Parents are not responsive to the needs and signals given by the child, do not involve the child in communication and activities, do not show love and pay little attention to the rhythm of the child’s behaviour and his individuality, and are ineffective in giving attention and rules. On the other hand, children are cared for by babysitters with a democratic parenting style but are less effective in providing attention and care. Children feel that caregivers are always there for them, involved in every activity and communication, provide affection, and respond to every child’s needs. Therefore, children make babysitters as their attached figures. Second, in subject 3, there are parents spending time working, so they spend little time interacting with their children. His parenting style is the authoritarian type. Parents do not support what the child wants, always dictate and do not give freedom of initiative, get angry easily when children show wrong behaviour, and give children a bad self-concept. Not responsive to the needs and signals are given by the child, does not involve the child in communication and activities, does not show love and pays little attention to the rhythm of the child’s behaviour and his individuality. This parenting style makes children feel uncomfortable and safe with their parents. Children make grandfathers as attachment figures. As long as the parents work, the child is raised by the grandfather with a democratic parenting style. Grandfather is responsive to the needs and signals are given by the child involves the child in communication and activities, is loving, and accepting and pays attention to the rhythm of the child’s behaviour and individuality. Third, in subject 4, there are parents with a democratic parenting style. Even though he works outside the house all day, he still spends a little quality time with his children. Taking the time to involve children in joint activities and communication, giving love both in speech and touch and responding to everything that children do. Grandmothers provide parenting in an authoritarian style with attention and rules that are less effective. Get angry easily when children show wrong behaviour, are not responsive to the needs and signals are given by the child, do not show love and pay little attention to the rhythm of the child’s behaviour and his individuality. In subject 4, the mother becomes a secure attachment figure for the child.

Based on the above conditions, it can be understood that children who make their mother an attachment figure have the potential to have a secure attachment even though they encounter an unsafe caregiver or environment. Meanwhile, children who make someone other than their mother as an attachment figure will potentially have insecure attachments even though they have a caregiver or a safe environment. Based on this condition, it can be said that children who can build a secure attachment to the first and closest environment (parents) will have good psychosocial development and the readiness to explore an unsafe environment. Meanwhile, children who have caregivers or a safe environment but do not form a secure attachment to their parents will experience problems or disturbances in every aspect of their development. The primary parenting role is that of the mother. The presence and interaction between mother and child may not be directly bound, but the quality of giving attention and contact with the child must be maintained in the midst of busyness so that a secure attachment between child and mother is formed. Berndt (Ekasari & Bayani) argues that a baby’s attachment behaviour will be biased towards certain people, usually the mother. Although the baby will be close to several people other than the mother, it is the attachment to the mother that influences it a lot.

The family environment, especially parents, is the first environment that is known by a child, so parents play an important role in creating this environment to stimulate all the potential of children so that they can develop optimally. An atmosphere full of love, willingness to accept children as they are, respecting children’s potential, and providing rich stimulation for all aspects of children’s development, both cognitively, affectively and psychometrically, all of these are real answers for the growth of superior generations in the future. Humans are born with an innate tendency to be attached to a protective caregiver. But in fact, children develop different types of attachments. There are children who are securely attached to their parents and others who find themselves alone in an insecure relationship. These individual differences are not genetic but determined by interactions with the social environment during the first few years of life. Sensitive or insensitive parenting is a key role in the formation of secure or insecure attachments. The development of attachment is greatly influenced by the sensitivity of the mother in responding to the signals given by the baby as soon as possible or delaying the response given is appropriate or not (Cenceng, 2015). Bowbly (in Monks, Knoer & Haditono) states that attachment can be very good and beneficial in the relationship between caregivers and mothers if the attachment figure is very sensitive to the needs of the child. According to Bowbly, Goldberg states that attachment is the organizational construction of parents or caregivers in responding to children’s affective signals when children organize emotional experiences and feelings of insecurity. Furthermore, Wenar & Kerig stated that caregivers must be sensitive in reading children’s signals and respond quickly with love. The etiological theory by
Berndt (Ekasari & Bayani) states that babies will be close to people who interact with them a lot. There are many factors that can influence attachment, some of which are temperament, sensitivity, responsiveness of attachment figures, affection, togetherness, the role of attachment figures, positive attitudes, etc. (Karina & Mulyati, 2007).

**Conclusion**

Based on the research results, it was found that there were differences in the attachments of children in dual–career families, including secure attachment, ambivalent attachment, and avoidant attachment. Different attachment patterns are shown because of the varied sample characteristics, where the samples have different parenting patterns and family backgrounds. Children who are cared for by caregivers have emotional problems, such as difficulty forming intimate and lasting relationships with other children. These children cannot love because they do not have the opportunity to form a solid attachment to the mother figure early in life. In the first years of life is a key time frame in the formation of attachment patterns because in the first years of life is the stage of the emergence of trust and mistrust. When secure attachment is formed within the child, then when encountering a new environment outside of his previous attachment figure, the child will tend to feel safe so that he has positive mental/emotional development. Children will be able to overcome traumatic experiences when the first experience (parents) makes them safe and protected. Secure attachment in the first years of life will provide an important foundation for later psychological development in a child's life. It is hoped that some of these conditions can become a reference for further research on child’s attachment, for example, efforts that can be made to increase the understanding of parents about the importance of developing a secure attachment for children and how big the impact on all aspects of children's development now and in the future.

**References**


Bowlby And Ainsworth, M. Development Psychology. 28, 759–775


