

# The Role of Mother Personality Traits and Mind-mindedness as Mediators of Mother Attachment Toward Child Attachment

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## 5 The Role of Mother Personality Traits and Mind-mindedness as Mediators of Mother Attachment Toward Child Attachment

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The objective of this study was to investigate the role of mother personality trait and mind-mindedness as mediators of mother attachment toward child attachment. The low correlation between mother attachment pattern and child attachment through a sensitivity mediator, support the search of other factors which could be a mediator of mother attachment towards child attachment. The samples ( $N = 211$ ) were housewives 25-45 year old as main caregivers with children of 3-5 year old residing in Bandung city. Instruments applied were Experiences in Close Relationship-Adult Attachment Questionnaire, Attachment Q-Set, Big Five Inventory, Mind-Mindedness and demographic data. Based on a structural equation model it was revealed that there was a fit between the theoretical model and the research data of mother attachment influencing child attachment mediated by mother trait extraversion, trait neuroticism, and mind-mindedness. It meant that mother personality and mind-mindedness played a role as mediators of mother attachment to child attachment.

*Keywords:* attachment, personality trait, mind-mindedness

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti peran sifat kepribadian dan *mind-mindedness* ibu sebagai mediator kelekatan ibu terhadap kelekatan anak. Rendahnya hubungan pola kelekatan ibu terhadap kelekatan anak melalui mediator sensitivitas mendorong pencarian factor lain sebagai mediator. Sampel penelitian adalah ibu rumah tangga berusia 25 - 45 tahun sebagai pengasuh utama dan memiliki anak usia 3 - 5 tahun. Sampel ( $N = 211$ ) adalah para ibu yang bertempat tinggal di kota Bandung. Alat ukur yang digunakan Experiences in Close Relationship-Adult Attachment Questionnaire, Attachment Q-Set, Big Five Inventory, Mind-Mindedness, serta data demografik. Berdasarkan model persamaan struktural diketahui ada kesesuaian (*fit*) antara model teoretik dan data penelitian yaitu kelekatan ibu memengaruhi kelekatan anak dengan dimediasi sifat *extraversion*, sifat *neuroticism* dan *mind-mindedness* ibu. Hal ini berarti sifat kepribadian dan *mind-mindedness* ibu berperan sebagai mediator kelekatan ibu terhadap kelekatan anak.

*Kato kunci:* kelekatan, sifat kepribadian, mind-mindedness

The emotional bond between mother and child will affect the development of the feeling of safety or security in the child's future, and will help the child develop healthy emotions and relationships as well (Flory, 2005). A mother can form a secure relationship with her child if the mother feels secure and would be a source of the secure feeling for their child.

The importance of mother and child emotional bond caused psychoanalysis experts to believe that the experience

of emotional bond during early childhood has a significant effect on the development of personality and adaptation after adulthood (Pervin, Cervone, & John, 2005).

Bowlby (1969) developed the psychoanalytical concept based on the ethological-evolutionary approach in the attachment theory. Bowlby (cited in Duey and Travers, 2002, p. 137) formulated his thoughts as "A warm, intimate relationship between mother and infant is essential to mental health because a child's need for its mother's presence is as great as its need for food."

Bowlby's theory of attachment drove Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Hall (1978) to test the theory by measuring 'the strange situation' in the laboratory in order to collect data in picturing child attachment pattern.

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Ainsworth et al. conducted the research to measure the relationship between mother sensitivity and child attachment of children one year of age. They found that children that had mothers with high sensitivity would show the behavior of secure attachment in a situation with strangers.

According to Ainsworth et al. (1978), sensitivity is the mothers' ability to read signals from their children correctly and respond accordingly, correctly and effectively. Mothers are able to read and respond to their children based on their understanding and ability to see something from the children's point-of-view. According to Ainsworth et al., there were two patterns of attachment, secure and insecure attachment, which were shown by children when they interact with their mothers. Several years later, a research was conducted by Main, Kaplan, and Cassidy (1985) in order to test theoretically and empirically the attachment patterns of adults. This was in line with Bowlby's belief (cited in Krikpatrick, 2005) that the attachment process happens throughout life, so the early experiences of attachment will be used as a model of close bonds or relationships with others until adulthood.

Results report by Main et al. (1985) regarding attachment patterns that were relatively stable and consistent from childhood to adulthood caused van IJzendoorn (1995) to be interested in researching the effects of parent attachment on child attachment with sensitivity as a mediator more in-depth. He assumed that if the attachment was relatively stable and consistent since childhood until adulthood, this could also be implemented on mother attachment on child attachment.

Bowlby (1973) previously indirectly explained the effect of parent attachment on child attachment related to the Internal Working Models (IWMs) of mothers and fathers. Internal Working Models are the mental depictions of the self, the parents, and the early experienced interactions as a child. Through Internal Working Models, children tend to repeat the relationship with their parents as children when they become parents in their future. Bowlby depicted the Internal Working Models process as the children's unconscious tendency to identify their parents and use the same form of behavior on their own children in the future, similar to what they experienced during childhood. The form of early interaction in attachment development has a more-or-less similar effect from one generation to the next.

The development of children attachment is affected by five factors, caregiver quality, caregiver characteristics, Internal Working Models, children characteristics, and family condition. First, the caregiver quality is related to the mothers' behavior of sensitivity in caring for their children, both physically through touch and embrace emotionally through praise, and cognitively through communication in

developing the children's knowledge and horizon upon their environment. Second, caregiver characteristics are related to the parent personality and function which affects child attachment. Third, Internal Working Models, described as the mental depiction of the self, parent, and early interaction process experienced by children with their parents, affecting the child attachment through the identification process. Fourth, children characteristics are related to the children's temperament and physical health. Based on the results of the research conducted by Vaughn, Lefever, Seifer, and Barglow (cited in Meins, 1997), children characteristics were not strongly affecting normal children, and temperament was not strongly affecting child attachment. Fifth, family condition is the social-economy status, consisting work, education, and the parents' level of income.

The result of the meta-analysis research conducted by van IJzendoorn (cited in De Wolff & van Uzendoorn, 1997) stated that mother sensitivity as a factor of caregiver quality was not the only main determinant of the relationship between mother and child attachment. He suggested 'a different factor' that needed to be added by re-exploring the forming of attachment patterns. A similar statement by Raval, Goldberg, Atkinson, Benoit, Myhal, Poulton, and Zwiers (2001) suggested in searching for another factor as the mediator of parent attachment on child attachment.

Meins (1997) developed a new concept as caregiver quality called mind-mindedness. The goal of the development of this concept was to perfect the concept of sensitivity by Ainsworth. Meins explained mind-mindedness as the parents' tendency in treating children as individuals with their own minds, not just as individuals with needs to be fulfilled.

Parents with high mind-mindedness will ask what the children are planning, what the children knew, and give comment to depict the children's mental attributes, such as "You are a clever child in doing that task.". According to Meins (1997), mental attribute is the depiction of the children's mental condition that includes positive mental attributes, such as happy, smart, understanding; and negative mental attributes, such as fearful, angry, hateful, and imitable. He stated that even the child sensitivity towards physical and emotional needs, should be clearly separatable from the sensitivity towards child's mental needs.

Meins (1998) stated that parents' secure feelings can be interpreted through meaningful communication because parents view their children as individuals with



their own minds. The concept of mind-mindedness clearly captures the meaning by Ainsworth, Bell, and Stayton (cited in Meins, Fernyhough, Fridley, & Turkey, 2001) in differentiating whether parents are sensitive of their children or not.

Another important factor that affects children attachment is the caregiver characteristics, especially mother characteristics (Schore, 2008). Lopez's (1995) showed that there was a relation between child attachment with mother personality. A different result was reported by Breidenbaugh (1996). He found that personality traits were not related to maternal affective involvement, and also was unable to predict child attachment. According to Breidenbaugh, in order to test the relationship between mother personality and child attachment, the combination of mother personality traits needed to be considered, in relation to child attachment or other variables. 1

According to Griffin and Bartholomew (1994, as cited in Crowd and Treboux, 1995), there is a high negative correlation between adult attachment and the neuroticism trait, and a moderate positive correlation with the extraversion, openness, and agreeableness traits. This meant that secure adults in their relationship with their partners had low scores in the neuroticism trait and high scores in the extraversion, openness, and agreeableness traits. Dom and Matthews (cited in Matthews, Deary, and Whiteman, 2003) stated that the extraversion and neuroticism traits had a high correlation with emotion; while Costa and McCrae (cited in Matthews et al., 2003) found that the agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness traits had low and significant correlation with emotion. Gray (cited in Matthews et al.) explained that the extraversion trait was related to positive feelings and neuroticism was related to negative feelings.

Mothers with stable secure and insecure attachment since childhood until early adulthood will affect the development of the mother extraversion and neuroticism traits since childhood, becoming stable when they were adults. This was shown by secure mothers who's behavior were related to closeness, feeling comfortable, and not easily distressed in developing a relationship with others; while insecure mothers will show feelings of discomfort, reluctance in developing a relationship with others, and being easily anxious in bonding with their partners (Bartholomew, as cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005).

A research regarding the relation of mother mind-mindedness with emotional problems was conducted by Lok and McMahon (2006), finding that mothers with high mind-mindedness would rarely show behaviors related to being distant from their children. McMahon and Meins (2011) showed that there was a relation between mind-mindedness in mothers experiencing stress and emotional problems. Mothers experiencing stress and emotional

problems would perceive their children and the children's behavior negatively, giving negative comments to them.

## Attachment

1 According to Bowlby (1969) attachment is a deep emotional bond between child and caregiver. The emotional bond has an emotional quality shown by the child by not only feeling stressed or pressured when separated from the caregiver and feeling happy when together, but also by the feeling of safety or security experienced by the child from the presence of the caregiver. Bowlby's statement was supported by van Ijzendoorn (2006) who stated that attachment is a child's tendency to search for closeness in the contact with the caregiver when the child is experiencing distress, pain, and fatigue. Attachment to the caregiver helps the child in regulating negative emotions in experiencing stress and distress conditions, or when exploring environment-meets with scary stimuli. This is also similar to Berk's (2000) statement regarding attachment, that it is a strong emotional bond felt by a person to another person, causing the feeling of happiness and joy when interacting with that person, also feeling safe when that person is close during experiences of pressure and stress.

Ainsworth, Bell, and Bretherton (cited in Zanden, 1997) stated that attachment is a bond of affection formed by a person to another that lasts regardless of time and place. This definition had the meaning that the formed emotional bond is not temporary, but will continue to develop and not limited by the presence of the source of attachment when the child grows into an adult.

Bowlby (cited in Pervin, Cervone, & John., 2005), based on clinical observation and literatures, formulated the Attachment Behavioral System (ABS) development theory. ABS is an effort to depict the mechanism of behavior management that contributes to the mobility and flexibility of social behavior (Waters, 1981). The ABS theory stated that infant development goes through a series of phases in the development of attachment with the main caregiver (usually the mother), and that attachment is useful as the secure base for children in situations of separation and exploration.

According to Bowlby's observation (cited in Mains, 1997), children in separation and exploration situations with their mothers showed several behaviors such as crying, holding their mothers' hand so they would not leave, feeling sad, stressed, scared; or the opposite, with the children continuing to play and ignoring the presence of their mothers. Ainsworth and Wittig (cited in Meins)

conducted a measurement of attachment with the stranger procedure and stated that secure children have the balance when they are faced with situations of separation and exploration, while insecure children experience difficulties in facing one or both of the situations.

After going through the development of ABS, infants start to develop Internal Working Models (IWMs) or mental depictions of their selves and their main caregivers. IWMs are associated with emotion and cognition. Based on the interactional experiences during infancy, this model provides a base for the future attachment development. The focus on the important attachment values is related to the emotional and cognitive relation during childhood for the development of personality and relationship with others in the future.

According to Bowlby (1969), the concept of Internal Working Models is an internalization of the infants' beliefs and meanings regarding the world where they live, their selves, and their caregivers. If the infants receive consistent and sensitive care, they start to have the experience that the caregivers are trustworthy because they nurture and protect them from threats. Infants will internalize the belief that they are precious and the world is a safe place. As the opposite, if the infants receive inconsistent, abusive, or ignorant care, their Internal Working Models will be filled with experiences and beliefs that the world is not a friendly and safe place.

Based on the laboratory research results, Ainsworth (1967) separated attachment into two types: secure and insecure attachment. Parke and Locke (2003) explained the characteristics of child attachment patterns as follows: a) Secure attachment pattern is shown by children with the feeling of safety to explore their environment, feeling slightly troubled by the temporary separation from their mothers, but when their mothers return, the children feel happy and greet them. b) Insecure attachment pattern consists of two patterns, which are: (1) insecure avoidant attachment, shown by children by not expressing sadness during temporary separation from their mothers, and avoiding their mothers during their return, at times seemingly troubled by the meeting, (2) insecure-resistant attachment, shown by children that tend to be troubled with their mothers' departure and show inconsistent behavior during their return, such as searching for contact with their mothers at one time or pushing them away at another time.

According to Bartholomew (cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005), there are two patterns in adult attachment: adult secure attachment and insecure attachment, both having a parallel relationship with child attachment patterns with these characteristics: a) secure attachment pattern, where the individual feels that it is relatively easy to be close and comfortable with relying on others, with others being able to rely on the individual; b) Insecure attachment

pattern, consisting of (1) dismissing, shown by the individual by feelings of discomfort with others and feeling that it is difficult to fully trust others; (2) preoccupied, shown by the individual by feeling that others are reluctant to be close with the individual. This individual often worry, that his partner does not truly love him or want to be with him. He/she is keen to achieve closeness with his partner.

Feeney (cited in Meins, 1997) stated several secure and insecure adult attachment behaviors. Secure adults show involvement and satisfaction in developing a relationship with others and their partners, have commitment, trust others, have warmth in their relationships, interdependent, know their own experienced distress and able to manage the distress in a constructive manner. Meanwhile, insecure adults show that they do not really trust others, have less involvement in developing relationships with others and their partners, experience distress in facing conflict in their environment, act hesitant and inconfident.

#### Mindmindedness

Mother mind-mindedness had the role of replacing mother sensitivity as a mediator of mother attachment towards child attachment. Because of this role, before discussing mother mind-mindedness in a more in-depth manner, an understanding of the role of mother sensitivity is needed. Psychology experts on attachment believe that mother or adult attachment determines the degree and quality of child secure attachment (Dacey & Travers, 2002). According to Ainsworth et al. (1978), sensitivity is the mother's ability to read signals of the child accurately and giving appropriate response, correctly and effectively. Mothers are able to do so based on the understanding and ability to see something from the child's point-of-view.

Results of Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) research showed that children who had sensitive and responsive mothers during their first year of life would made the children to be more expressive towards the feeling of anger and fear, similar to when they were observed in the laboratory using the separation procedure. Children see their mothers who have a secure base as someone that is always there for them when they are facing difficulties. A similar research should be conducted by different researchers in order to support the relationship between mother sensitivity behavior and child attachment quality of children one year of age.

Researches regarding mother sensitivity were conducted intensively related to the forming of child attachment.



Sensitive mothers would develop child secure attachment. Despite that, several of the latest studies regarding sensitivity had not been able to bridge the gap between mother attachment towards child attachment. The meta-analysis results conducted by van IJzendoorn (cited in de Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997) showed the low relationship of mother attachment pattern and child attachment pattern with mother sensitivity as the mediator. Other researches conducted by Pederson, Gleason, Moran, and Bento (1998) and Raval et al (2001) also stated that mother sensitivity was not the main determining factor of mother and child attachment relationship, and suggested that there was a need to add another factor by re-exploring the development of child attachment pattern.

Meins (1997) tried to search for another factor. He developed the concept of mind-mindedness which is the tendency of parents, especially the mother, in treating their child as an individual with autonomic thoughts, expressed by the mother in depicting the child's mental attributes. The concept of mind-mindedness is the method to understand the development of child social understanding. Meins et al. (2001) explained more regarding the children's role as 'mental agents', which are the children's mental condition that pushes them to better understand their selves and others, resulting in a good self-awareness related to their beliefs and behaviors. This concept helps in explaining why children feel secure during infancy.

According to Meins (1997), child mental capacity is related to mother mind-mindedness through the mother's tendency to treat the child as an individual with his/her own thoughts since an early age. Mother mind-mindedness can be seen from how high mother sensitivity towards the child's desires and goals. Mothers with high mind-mindedness will certainly support their children in understanding their selves and others. The analysis by Meins, Femyhough, Russel, and Clark-Carter (1998) found the direct effect of previous development, which is infancy toward a three years old child mental ability. They then suggested that if mind-mindedness was a stable characteristic, then mental attribute had a contribution to the development of pre-school child social understanding.

Meins et al. (2001) stated that the mothers' ability to understand and respond appropriately with the child's mental condition and emotion is the indicator of secure attachment. Mothers with mind-mindedness can help develop child's social understanding by teaching the child in recognizing their own thoughts, desires, and preferences through the mothers' comment regarding the child's mental condition, helping the child in facing situations of exploration and separation from the mother in the environment. Children that have their own thoughts will perceive their selves and the environment better, reducing the fear when they are exploring the environment and learning how to face

situations of separation with minimum fear (Fleming, 2008). According to Meins and Femyhough (2010), mind-mindedness in children above 3 years of age or pre-schoolers focuses on the quantity of mothers' comments regarding the depiction of the child mental attribute. Attribute is classified into two categories, which are mental attribute and other attributes.

Mental attribute is a reference regarding the child mental depiction that consists of desires, thoughts, intelligence, meta-cognition, imagination, and comments related to motives, hopes, and emotions. This category does not consist of comments regarding matters liked and disliked by the child or behavior tendencies, for example: "He likes soccer." The other attribute that refers to children consists of behavioral attribute, physical attribute, and general attribute. (1) Behavior attribute refers to behaviors such as child games or activities or the interaction of children with others on a behavioral level; (2) Physical attribute refers to children's physical appearance, age, and the depiction of the children's position in their families; (3) General attribute is the depiction that does not refer to the other categories. Mind-mindedness is measured by the sum of mental attributes expressed by the mothers in depicting their children.

#### Personality

According to Cloninger (2004), personality is the primary base that determines how an individual behave and face experiences, meanwhile Allport and Odbert (cited in Beitel, 2002) stated that personality is the capacity that differentiate the behaviors of one human from the others. Pervin et al. (2005) stated that personality is a person's characteristics that causes consistency in feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. According to Pervin et al. (2005), personality traits refer to the consistent pattern in how an individual behave, feel, or think. When describing a person with 'good' traits, it means that the person tend to act good from time to time and from one situation to the other.

The definition indirectly stated that trait has the main function of summarizing how a person is different from the others. Categorizing a person by giving them the description of 'good' traits means summarizing the history of good actions done by a person. Traits enable the prediction of a person's future behaviors. Traits indicate that the explanation of a person's behavior can be found in the person and not in the situation. A good person would act good despite there is no situational pressure or external

reward to be good. This is the internal process or mechanism that causes the behavior (Pervin et al., 2005).

Even after years of research, experts such as Eysenck and Cattell still debated regarding the number and characteristics of the basic dimensions of personality traits. This issue was not solved because of the lack of arrangement and listing. In 1980, there was a development in the quality and method, especially with the factor analysis, resulting in a consensus. According to John and Srivastava (cited in Pervin et al., 2005), current researchers approve that individual differences can be organized in five bipolar dimensions. These five dimensions are now known as the five factor theory of Costa and McCrae. The Trait Theory based on the viewpoints of Costa and McCrae (cited in Pervin et al., 2005) is the five factor theory stating that there are five main traits. In this theory, traits are treated as if they really exist. Each factor is considered as a psychological structure inside every person in various levels, analogue with body height. Traits are considered to causally affect every psychological development on an individual. The five factors are basic tendencies that are universal or inside every individual.

There are three issues which become specific problems of the five factor theory. First is how to relate personality structures with the personality process which is rarely discussed. The view of Costa and McCrae is a detail that needs to be perfected by other personality theories approach as this is a significant theoretical weakness (cited in Pervin et al., 2005). This weakness is not because a dynamic process that has not been fulfilled, but because the lack of clarity regarding the method and principles in order to achieve the process. Traits are just considered as 'tendencies' because of the causal mechanism associated with traits is unknown, making it difficult to develop a model that can connect the dynamic process.

The second problem is the statement that traits are not affected by social factors, which was found to be the opposite to the theoretical concepts of Costa and McCrae. Twenge (cited in Pervin et al., 2005) conducted a research regarding the change of personality trait score, observed throughout history. Twenge found that anxiety increased significantly during the last period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He also found that there was a significant increase in extraversion trait throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century last decades, reflecting the increase of the attention of Americans towards individualism and personal assertiveness. Twenge's (cited in Pervin et al., 2005) results were related to the social change, directly the opposite of the statement that personality traits are not affected by social factors.

The third problem is the claim of the five factor theory that the five factors are inside every person. This means that every individual has the psychological structure that is related with every factor in various levels. The problem

lies in the fact that this theoretical claim is not supported with sufficient empirical evidence. The supporting evidence includes the population statistical analysis. The five factors work well in summarizing the individual differences in a general population, but this finding does not show if every individual in the population has all of the existing factors (Pervin et al., 2005).

How stable are the basic tendencies in someone's life? Do personality traits follow the stable development route that is determined biologically as stated by Costa and McCrae? There are three different viewpoints regarding this, which are: The first viewpoint stated that most of the development of personality trait has been determined biologically and continually (Caspi, 2000, cited in Pervin et al., 2005). The second viewpoint stated that though there is a proof of trait consistency throughout the range of age, the consistency does not ensure that there will be no change (Roberts & Del Vecchio, 2000, cited in Pervin et al., 2005). The third viewpoint is regarding the fact that even though the general structure and trait level are stable, there are proof of changes on the individual level (Asendorp & van Aken, 1999, cited in Pervin et al.).

Suomi (cited in Pervin et al., 2005) stated that parental care can affect the development of personality traits during childhood until early adulthood. Based on the current data, this indicates several points: (1) personality traits are more stable in short periods than in long periods; (2) personality traits are more stable during adulthood than during childhood; (3) even though there were proofs of trait stability, there are individual differences during development; and (4) even though there were proofs of trait stability, the limit of the environmental effect on the change during childhood and adulthood is not yet certain (Pervin et al., 2005).

Costa and McCrae (cited in Larsen & Buss, 2005) developed the personality inventory commonly known as NEO-PI-R or OCEAN by using the Big Five Models approach, consisting of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness.

### Research Questions

Questions to be answered in this study: (1) did the theoretical model related to the role of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators of mother attachment to child attachment fit the data; (2) how was the structural relation of the role of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators of mother attachment toward child attachment.



Research Goals

The goal of this study was to test the theoretical model and structural relationship of the role of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators of mother attachment towards child attachment.

The hypothesis of this study was that the theoretical model of mother attachment affected child attachment with the mediation of mother extraversion and neuroticism trait, and the mother mind-mindedness fit the data.

Method

This study was a non-experimental quantitative research that analyzed the effect of mother attachment towards child attachment mediated by the caregiver characteristics factor, which were mother personality traits and caregiver quality in the form of mother mind-mindedness.

Child attachment was measured using the Attachment Q-Set (AQS) inventory, developed by Waters and Diane (cited in Vasta et al., 2004). AQS measures the mothers' experience in observing the children's behavior during interaction with their mothers or other people in the environment. Mothers were asked to divide the statements into two groups, which were statements that fit or did not fit with their child's behavior, while mother attachment was measured by using Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) Inventory—Adult Attachment Questionnaire developed by Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998).

Personality was measured using the Big Five Inventory (BFI) constructed by John, Donahue, and Kentle (1991, as cited in Pervin & John, 1999), and mind-mindedness was measured using Mind-Mindedness Coding Manual Version 2.0 developed by Meins and Fernyhough (2010) in order to measure mothers' tendency in treating their children by giving out comments about depictions of the children's mental attribute, noting each word expressed by the mothers. Mind-mindedness scoring was based on the sum of mothers' comments regarding the child mental attribute depiction, using the list of words from the elaboration results of Laztke (2002) and Pesticelli (1999) from the coding manual of Meins et al. (1998), as shown in Table 1.

The samples in this study were housewives as the main caregivers, who were 25-45 years old and had 35 years old children. The total of the samples were 211 mothers, collected from 7 Playgrounds and Kindergardens in Bandung and the surrounding areas. Housewives were chosen because mothers had more time to interact and nurture children at home. The age of the children was chosen based on the findings of Meins et al. (1998), related to beginning of the development of children's cognitive and language abilities in relation to the concept of mind-mindedness during pre-school period. According to Piaget (cited in Santrock, 2008), children 35 years of age are in the pre-operational phase where children start to depict the world with words and think with simple language concepts instead of doing it physically as before. In researches regarding mind-mindedness, there were no

Table 1

*Mental Attribute Word List*

<i>Mental Attribute</i>	<i>Mental Attribute</i>	<i>Mental Attribute</i>
<i>Ingin (want)</i>	<i>Idea, gagasan (idea)</i>	<i>Ketertarikan (interested)</i>
<i>Berharap (hope)</i>	<i>Mempertimbangkan (consider)</i>	<i>Merasa kecewa (frustrated)</i>
<i>Mengharapkan (wish)</i>	<i>Bermaksud (have in mind)</i>	<i>Menjengkelkan (annoyed)</i>
<i>Berpikir (think)</i>	<i>Membayangkan (imagine)</i>	<i>Muak, jemu (fed tip)</i>
<i>Mengetahui (know)</i>	<i>Bahagia (happy)</i>	<i>Melukai (hurt)</i>
<i>Percaya (believe)</i>	<i>Tak bahagia (unhappy)</i>	<i>Pintar (smart)</i>
<i>Menyangka (expect)</i>	<i>Sedih (sad)</i>	<i>Jijik (disgusted)</i>
<i>Ingin tahu (wonder)</i>	<i>Merasa (feel)</i>	<i>Menyedihkan (miserable)</i>
<i>Impian (dream)</i>	<i>Marah (angry)</i>	<i>Kebencian (hate)</i>
<i>Peduli (care about)</i>	<i>Galak (grumpy)</i>	<i>Tak suka (dislike)</i>
<i>Berpura-pura (pretend)</i>	<i>Takut (scared)</i>	<i>Menikmati (enjoy)</i>
<i>Masuk akal (make sense)</i>	<i>Ketakutan (afraid)</i>	<i>Senang (glad)</i>
<i>Mengira (suppose)</i>	<i>Menjadi takut (frightened)</i>	<i>Perasaan baik (feel good)</i>
<i>Tak usah sangsi (bet)</i>	<i>Gila (mad)</i>	<i>Perasaan buruk (feel bad)</i>
<i>Lebih suka (prefer)</i>	<i>Kesal (upset)</i>	<i>Suka (like)</i>
<i>Mengingat (remember)</i>	<i>Kecewa (disappointed)</i>	<i>Mencintai (love)</i>
<i>Mengerti (understand)</i>	<i>Cemas (worried)</i>	<i>Memutuskan (decide)</i>
<i>Melupakan (forget)</i>	<i>Mengherankan (surprised)</i>	<i>Ingin tahu (curious)</i>
<i>Mengingatkan (remind)</i>	<i>Senang, puas (pleased)</i>	<i>Menyadari (realize)</i>
<i>Salah menanggapi (missing)</i>	<i>Gembira (excited)</i>	



particular focus or limitations about mothers' age and child order, giving importance to the mother ability in giving meaningful comments in depicting their children.

Respondents (232%) were 25-30 years old, 40.8% were 31-35 years old 27.9% were 36-40 years old, and 1% were 41-45 years old. Their level of education were generally academics/colleges until university graduates (62.6%) and senior high school graduates (37.4%). The level of father involvement in caring for their children was 63.54%, the rest involved other members of the family and other people outside the family.

## Results

The author adapted the structural equation model analysis on five variables consisting one exogenous variable which was mother attachment, one endogenous variable, the child attachment, and three mediating variables, extraversion trait, neuroticism trait, and mother mind-mindedness. The structural equation model tested the effect of mother attachment mediated by extraversion trait, neuroticism trait, and mother mind-mindedness towards child attachment. Results used was the model that fits the study data.

The analysis results of the structural equation model showed that there was a similarity between the theoretical model with the study data. which was 234 fit index = 1 with the score = .13; the GFI score = .99; with AGFI = .92; RMSEA = .08; and CFI score = .9729. Table 2 reveals the results of the study model equation that fits the data.

The structural equation model test conducted in this study revealed that the mother attachment theoretical model affected child attachment with the mediation of extraversion trait, neuroticism trait and mother mind-mindedness, fits the data.

Regarding the results of the theoretical model testing that fit the field data, the structural equation relation could be concluded in the results of this study as

Tabel 3

follows; Mother attachment had a direct significant effect on the mother personality traits mediator, both extraversion and neuroticism trait and on mother mind-mindedness, as well. Mother extraversion trait had a direct significant effect on the mother mind-mindedness mediator, but the neuroticism trait did not have a direct and significant effect on mother mind-mindedness.

Mother extraversion trait did not have a direct significant effect on child attachment, while neuroticism trait and mother mind-mindedness had a direct significant effect on child attachment. Mother attachment with the mediation of extraversion trait, neuroticism trait, and mother mind-mindedness had an indirect significant effect on child attachment. This meant that (1) mother attachment with the mediation of extraversion trait and mother mind-mindedness had an indirect

significant effect on child attachment; (2) mother attachment with the mediation of mother neuroticism trait without going through mother mind-mindedness had an indirect effect on child attachment; and (3) mother attachment with the mediation of mother mind-mindedness without going through mother personality traits had an indirect significant effect on child attachment.

## Discussion

The goal of this study was to find the role of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators of

Figure 1. Diagram of the t-value and standard solution of structural model route

mother attachment towards child attachment. This was based on the thoughts of van IJzendoorn (1995) that if attachment was relatively stable and consistent since childhood to adulthood, then parent attachment can affect child attachment. This meant that a secure mother would have a secure child and vice versa, so parent attachment can be used to predict child attachment (Dacey & Travers, 2002).

The results of the theoretical model testing with structural equation model analysis showed that mother attachment affected child attachment with the mediation of mother personality trait and mind-mindedness fit the data. This meant that secure mother would have secure child, if the variables went through the mediators of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness. This was similar with the thoughts of van IJzendoorn (cited in de Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Raval et al., 2001) which stated that the effects of mother attachment to child attachment is not direct, but in need of another factor as a mediator from mother attachment toward child attachment, which are mother personality traits and mind-mindedness.

Based on the structural model analysis, it was found that mother attachment with the mediation of mother extraversion trait and mind-mindedness had an indirect significant effect on child attachment. This was similar to the results of previous researches (Latzke, 2002; Pescitelli, 1999) that showed that mother extraversion trait with the mediation of mother mind-mindedness caused mothers to be able to express their own thoughts through language to their child.

Mother attachment with the mediation of mother neuroticism trait without going through mother mind-

mindedness had an indirect significant effect on child attachment (as shown in Figure 1). Mother neuroticism trait was not mediated by mother mind-mindedness, making this result different with that of Lok and McMahon's research (2006) and McMahon and Meins' (2011) which stated that stress and emotional problems will cause mothers to perceive the child and their behavior negatively, causing negative comments. The results of this study showed that mothers with high neuroticism trait would be hindered in interacting and communicating with their children. Mothers felt reluctant and anxious in giving out comments depicting the child mental condition or the opposite, giving out many comments that were not appropriate with the child mental condition. As a result, the child could not really understand their self and the environment, causing the child to feel that it was difficult in facing situations of exploration in the environment and separation from their mother.

Results of mother attachment analysis showed a direct significant effect on mother extraversion trait. This meant that secure mothers had high extraversion trait and insecure mothers had low extraversion trait. This was similar to the results of Shaver and Brennan's (1992) research that showed the effect of mother attachment to extraversion trait. According to Feeney (1999, cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005), secure mother behavior reflect warmth and social involvement in the environment, having flexibility in relating with others, while insecure

mothers have reluctance and suspicion towards others, also lack of confidence in relating with others in the environment.

Results of mother attachment analysis showed a direct significant effect on mother neuroticism trait. This meant that secure mothers had low neuroticism trait, while insecure mothers had high neuroticism trait. This was similar with the results of Shaver and Brennan's (1992) research that showed the effect of mother attachment to neuroticism trait. According to Feeney (cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005), mothers with secure behavior were aware of the experienced distress and is able to process the negative effects of distress, while insecure mothers have the characteristics of showing anxiety in their relationship with their partners because they feel that their partners do not really love them (Bartholomew, as cited in Kirkpatrick).

Results of this study showed that neuroticism trait had a direct significant effect on child attachment, similar to the results of Steir and Lehman's (2000) study that showed that child attachment can be predicted through mother personality, but extraversion trait does not have a direct significant effect on child attachment, needing another variable as a mediator, being the mother mind-mindedness.

There are three viewpoints arguing about the position of mother attachment and personality traits, which are: (1) mother attachment and personality traits correlate with each other (Griffin & Bartholomew, as cited in Crowell & Treboux, 1995); (2) personality as an exogenic variable that affects mother attachment (Beitel, 2002); (3) mother attachment as an exogenic variable that affects personality traits (Pervin et al., 2005). These three arguments are correct depending on the supporting empirical theories and researches. The author adopt the third viewpoint, in tune with the attachment theory and opinion of Waters (1981) regarding attachment as a construct of personality traits.

Mother attachment had a direct significant effect on the mediator of mother mind-mindedness, so secure mothers would be more sensitive in giving out comments related to positive mental attributes. This was similar with Meins' (1999) opinion in explaining mind-mindedness as the mediator between mother attachment to child attachment. This finding was different from the results of Bernier and Dozier's (2003) research which measured mind-mindedness on 6-18 months old infants.

Analysis of the mediator mother mind-mindedness, showed a direct effect on child attachment. This meant that mothers with high mind-mindedness would give out comments related to child mental attributes that were appropriate with the child's condition, causing the child's

child to feel secure. This was similar with Meins' (1997) opinion that child mental capacity is related to mother mind-mindedness through the mothers tendency to treat their children as individuals with their own thoughts since an

early age. Mother mind-mindedness can be seen from the level of mother sensitivity concerning the desires and goals. Mothers with high mind-mindedness would encourage their children to understand their selves and others, causing their children to feel secure.

The theoretical implication related to the separation and scoring on positive and negative mental attributes in the measurement of mind-mindedness showed an effect on child attachment. Meins and Femyhough (2010) did not differentiate mental attribute into positive and negative mental attributes in evaluating mind-mindedness. They focused more on whether mothers' comments were appropriate or non-attended in depicting child mental attribute.

The theoretical benefits of this study was in finding new words to add to the list of mind-mindedness related words constructed by Meins and Femyhough (2010), such as *keukeuh* (adamant), *ngeyel* (stubborn), *ngambek* (pout/mope), *ngadat* (malfunctioning), *sirikan* (envious), *ringkih* (fragile), *pundung* (discouraged/disappointed), *juiek* (bad-tempered/hostile), *cuek* (aloof), *fides* (malicious), and *ogocan* (pampered due to being mollycoddled). These words that originated from local language and Indonesian can be used as a scoring guide of mind-mindedness measurement. Aside from that, it also introduce an alternative scoring technique by giving different scores to differentiate the positive and negative mental attributes in measuring mind-mindedness.

## Conclusion

The hypothesis of the role of mother personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators of mother attachment to child attachment was accepted. This meant that mother personality traits and mind-mindedness acted as 'another factor' in bridging mother attachment to child attachment. Further the mind-mindedness as a mediator could have an independent role without going through personality traits in bridging mother attachment to child attachment, where mother mental attribute was not separated from the local culture. Mother extraversion and neuroticism trait would have a bigger role if it went through mother mind-mindedness in bridging mother attachment towards child attachment.

## Suggestions

The methodological suggestion is related to the scoring of mother mind-mindedness, the positive mental attributes



should be separated from the negative mental attributes and be given different score values of each. The list of words on mind-mindedness collected from this study can be used as a guide for evaluation, while the list can also be developed and added by conducting cross-cultural studies in Indonesia.

A practical suggestion from the results of this study is to organize training regarding mind-mindedness to parents in order to increase their ability in depicting mental attributes to develop secure attachment in their children. Future investigators should (1) study mother mind-mindedness and sensitivity simultaneously as mediators of mother attachment to child attachment because the concept of mind-mindedness is a development of the mother sensitivity concept, so as to support and complement one another; (2) study the effects of mother and father attachment simultaneously toward the development of child attachment by including personality traits and mind-mindedness as mediators. This is based on the data from the research results that showed the significance of mother and father's involvement in nurturing and caring for the child, which would affect the development of child attachment; and (3) study the role of mother and father's Internal Working Models towards the development of child attachment and development of child personality.

## References

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PAGE 1

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PAGE 2

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PAGE 3

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PAGE 4

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PAGE 5

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PAGE 6

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PAGE 7

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PAGE 8

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PAGE 9

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PAGE 10

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PAGE 11

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