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# *Influence of Parenting Style on Self-efficacy of Children*

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***Keywords:*** parenting style, self-efficacy, mental health.

***Abstract:*** Self-efficacy has an important influence on individual health and individual growth, and is formed and changed in interaction with others. As the main object of individual early interaction, parents' upbringing with their children has an impact on their children's self-efficacy. Based on the four factors of parenting style, this study aimed to review the influence of parental rearing style on children's self-efficacy. These findings suggest that good parenting style has a positive effect on children's self-efficacy.

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## 1. Introduction

The multidimensional definition of health in World Health Organization (WHO) not only contained the dimension of physical health, also the mental health. However, the concept of health remained at the level of mental health in real life. According to statistics by WHO, Mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in people aged 10-19 years[1].

There is the correlation between self-efficacy and many factors (depression, self-esteem, anxiety, subjective happiness) that respond to mental health. Self-efficacy was defined by Bandura as an individual's belief in the ability to organize, execute, and achieve specific achievement results[2]. That is, self-efficacy is the self-evaluation of one's own ability. Self-efficacy has the following functions: (1) Influencing people's behavioral choices. Individuals generally tend to choose the activities or environments which that they can cope with. (2) Affecting people's thinking process. People with high self-efficacy will look at difficulties with a positive and optimistic attitude and actively seek solutions to problems; people with low self-efficacy are afraid of failure, thereby reducing their level of effort. (3) Affecting people's emotional processes. In negative situations, there is a close connection between self-efficacy and the individual's negative emotional processes. (4) Affecting individual effort. People with high self-efficacy believe that they can overcome difficulties to complete the task, so they will put in greater effort. People with low self-efficacy tend to be incapable of a certain task and will treat it negatively[3].

In addition, self-efficacy is also related to individual creativity and academic performance. Albert Bandura pointed out that self-efficacy can directly determine the motivation level of an individual's creative activities[4]. Wang,W., Lei and Wang X. believe that most impact studies have found that self-efficacy can affect students' academic performance to a certain extent[5]. The long-term low self-efficacy could aggravate the individual feelings of insecurity to damage their mental health.

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The parental rearing style played an important role on children's self-efficacy [6]. Zhang, Fang and Ling pointed that four factors affected the formation and change of self-efficacy, including that individual success or failure experience, alternative experience, verbal persuasion and emotional and physiological state[3]. These four factors reflected that the interaction process and experience between individuals and others, affecting the formation and change of self-efficacy. Because the family members have relatively more interaction, parents' rearing style has an impact on self-efficacy in the process of children's growth.

## 2. Research background

Parental rearing style (Parenting style) was first proposed by Baumrind, which includes the number and type of requirements for children and the timely feedback of parents' behavior towards children in the process of upbringing children[7]. Since then, other researchers have defined the different ways of upbringing from their own angles, but they all include the requirement of parents and the feeling of children.

Parental rearing style has an important influence on children's personality growth and mental health[8]. In the study of neurosis population, it was found that improper parenting style was one of the risk factors to promote neurosis in children[9-11]. Different researchers had different understanding of the classification criteria of parental rearing style, and put forward their own classification criteria[12-13]. Baumrind divided the parenting style into three types: authoritative style, authoritarian style and permissive style[14]. On this basis, Maccobby and Martindivided the parental rearing styles into four types: authoritative, authoritarian, doting, and neglect based on the parent's demanding and responsive levels to children[12]. However, in practical studies, researchers usually used the parental rearing style evaluation scale to measure parental rearing style.

Egna Minnen Betraffande Upfosrtran (EMBU) was a questionnaire prepared by Perris et al. in 1980 to evaluate parenting attitudes and behaviors[15]. The scale was translated into multiple versions, which was used in many countries and regions. Because the EMBU scale tests many entries, the more acceptable standard when analyzing the results of the scale was the four dimension proposed by Arrindell，Emmelkmap, Brilman and Monsma[8]. The four dimensions is: Rejection, emotional warmth, over-protection and favor-subject. And parents are composed of these four factors.

## 3. Effect of parental rearing style on self-efficacy

EMBU scales were widely used to explore the relationship between parental rearing style and mental health. Self-efficacy has an important impact on mental health and is also included in the research variables. However, there were the following problems in the existing studies: the existing studies rarely integrated the relationship between parental rearing style and self-efficacy based on these scale factors. Therefore, based on the four factors of the EMBU scale, this paper aimed to review the relationship between parental rearing style and self-efficacy to integrate the existing research.

### 3.1. Rejection and self-efficacy

Arrindell et al. proposed that the rejection referred to the parents' refusal to recognize the child as an independent individual, characterized by the parents' mandatory and punitive requirements for the children. The main manifestations were corporal punishment, hostility, derogation, disrespect for the views of children, punishment in the name of love and public criticism.[8]. A large number of studies have shown that rejection has a negative effect on children's self-efficacy.

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Researchers believed that this upbringing would never allow children to transcend the instinctive inferiority complex in front of adults[8][15]. Self-efficacy is a kind of basic self-confidence when individuals deal with different problems in stranger environments. Rejection would make children get negative self-evaluation and reduce self-efficacy.

### 3.2. Emotional warmth and self-efficacy

Arrindell et al. indicated that the emotional warmth dimension was the behavior of parents who praised their children and gave them special attention and help. It was noting that the characteristic of rejection dimension was punishment, and the characteristic of emotional warmth dimension was praise[8]. The influence of emotional warmth on children's self-efficacy was predictable. Parental emotional warmth helps children to form a high self-efficacy[16-18].

It was also found in China that mothers' emotional warmth had a greater impact on their children than parents' emotional warmth[21]. This may be due to the traditional culture of "male master outside, female master inside" and "strict father and warm mother" in China. Mothers prefer to provide emotional care, while fathers tend to be instrumental[19]. In common Chinese families, mothers and children have more interaction, and the emotional warmth of mothers can bring positive emotional experience to their children.

### 3.3. Over protection and self-efficacy

The dimension of over protection showed a relatively high degree of parental harassment of children, including (but not limited) excessive participation of parents in the life of their children, strict enforcement of children's regulations on parents and absolute obedience. Parents' over-protection limits their children's opportunities to adapt to society, helping to develop attachment to parents and terror to unfamiliar environments[8]. Heliport parents are typical of over-protection and over-participation, which hang above their children like helicopters, paying attention to and protecting their children. In single parent families, heliport parents have an effect on the self-efficacy and happiness of single parent sons[20].

In local research, researchers believed that the two dimensions of excessive interference and over protection of Chinese family parents have a lower impact on their children's mental health[21]. The possible reason is that Chinese children are dependent on their parents and they do not think that over protection is a negative experience. Western countries emphasize the independent level of children in education, so the excessive protection of parents is a negative experience for children.

### 3.4. Favor-subject and self-efficacy

Although Arrindell et al. did not give a clear definition of favor-subject, it could be considered that favor-subject meant that parents gave more love to one child among their brothers and sisters, according to the analysis of the items related to favor-subject dimension. Among the four factors, the explanatory power of the favor-subject dimension was low. Arrindell et al. thought that the dimension may be lack of relevant research[8]. When Arrindell et al . simplified the EMBU scale in 1991, only remaining other dimensions, excluding favor-subject factor[22].In the study of Yue, there was no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group[21].

Jiang, Lu, Jiang and Yan believed that the families of only children had increased and the favor-subject dimension had lost significance under the influence of China's basic national policy of family planning[23].

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## 4. Discussion

Of course, this article also has the following shortcomings:

In the study of parental rearing style on children's self-efficacy, there is no empirical evidence that parental rearing style has an impact on children's self-efficacy. Laboratory research is difficult and does not conform to ethical norms.

The study of favor-subject dimension is not enough. It is worth to explore the role of favor-subject factor on self-efficacy.

Prospects for future research:

(1)It is possible to explore the changes of children's brain regions in different rearing styles and infer the relationship between them and self-efficacy, taking into account physiological studies.

(2)With the attention and support of society to family education, the parenting style of parents may change in learning. Longitudinal follow-up studies can be carried out to pay attention to the influence of different stages of upbringing on children's self-efficacy. This direction can also help the government and society to help children who have suffered domestic violence or orphans who lack parental upbringing in welfare homes to screen foster parents and help them build a sense of self-efficacy.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, among the four factors of the EMBU scale, parental emotional warmth helped children to form a higher sense of self-efficacy, rejection, over protection was not conducive to the establishment of children's sense of self-efficacy, and the favor-subject dimension lacks relevant research and had not been conclusive. In general, positive parenting style had a positive impact on children's self-efficacy.

With the increase of social investment in education and educational resources, the importance of positive upbringing to the growth of children was heard by the public. But in real life, there was still the phenomenon of improper parenting. Many parents do not understand the core difference of upbringing style, and often pay attention to its superficial meaning when interacting with their children. Emotional warmth and rejection were negatively correlated and moderately correlated in the study of Arrindell, and rejection and excessive protection were also moderately correlated.[8]. Parents should grasp the relationship between factors and find a balance when interacting with their children.

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