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# IMPACT OF PARENT REARING STYLE AND SOCIETAL INFLUENCE ON THE CREATIVITY TENDENCY OF COLLEGE STUDENTS: A MEDIATED MODERATION MODEL

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## Abstract

This study investigated the influence of parental rearing styles and societal factors on the creativity tendency of college students using a mediated moderation model. By considering the broader societal context, the research aimed to explore how external influences shape students' creative tendencies alongside parental rearing styles. The study also examined parental parenting styles, considering the mediating role of creative self-efficacy and the moderating effect of media literacy. A questionnaire survey was conducted with 951 college students at a university in Jiangxi Province, China. The data collected were analyzed for reliability, validity, and confirmatory factor analysis using SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 22.0. Regression analysis, difference analysis, descriptive statistics, and other methods were employed to investigate the impact pathways, and Structural Equation Modeling was utilized to test the mediating effect. The results of the study revealed that parental parenting styles positively influence creativity tendency, creative self-efficacy has a significant positive impact on creativity tendency, and creative self-efficacy acts as a mediator in the relationship between parental parenting styles and creativity tendency. Additionally, media literacy was found to moderate the association between parental parenting styles and creative tendencies.

**Keywords:** Parent Rearing Style, Creating Self-Efficacy, Media Literacy, Creativity Tendency

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## **Introduction**

Creativity is a driving force in human society's development, leading to scientific and technological progress (Na, 2014). The continuous advancement of society relies on innovation. Research on creativity development, especially among college students, has intensified globally. The college years are a crucial period for nurturing creative tendencies, as individuals are at the peak of their physical and cognitive abilities. Cultivating creative abilities in students is essential for societal progress and the development of creative talent (Lin, 2005). Understanding how societal factors impact college students' creativity is essential for a comprehensive analysis. By considering cultural, economic, and environmental influences, researchers aim to illuminate the shaping of students' creative tendencies. This approach provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and parents, offering a holistic view of creative development in higher education. The societal perspective captures the complexity of creativity and its connection to the broader social context. This study focuses on parent rearing style, creative self-efficacy, and media literacy as key factors influencing college students' creative tendencies. By analyzing their interrelationships through a structural model, the study aims to provide guidance for fostering creativity among parents and students.

## **Literature Review**

In the literature review process, extensive attention has been paid to the study of four key variables: parent-rearing style, creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency. How does the parent-rearing style affect the creativity tendency of college students? What role does creative self-efficacy play in this process? Can media literacy promote creativity? Through a deeper exploration of these key variables, we can expect to better understand the interaction of family education, self-creativity, and social media with the creative ability of college students. What follows is an elaboration of the current state of these key variables and their correlations to provide guidance and revelation for further research and practice.

### **The Relationship between Parent Rearing Style, Creative Self-Efficacy and Creativity Tendency**

Parenting style significantly influences children's self-efficacy and non-intellectual development (Shang et al., 2009). It shapes their confidence and sense of efficacy. Research shows that parenting style affects children's personal traits and creativity tendency (Qian & Xia, 1996). The parenting style of college students plays a crucial role in their personal traits, social adaptability, and motivation to learn. Parental rearing style has a significant impact on the creativity tendency and self-efficacy of middle school students (Liu et al., 2013). Parenting style significantly influences children's creativity. Authoritative parenting fosters creativity by providing structure and support, while authoritarian parenting suppresses it with high control (Reuter et al., 2006). Permissive parenting allows for creative exploration but lacks guidance, and neglectful parenting hinders creativity due to lack of attention (Zhao, 2010; Fearon et al., 2013). Factors like parental expectations, education, and family environment also play a crucial role in nurturing creativity. Research suggests that a poor family environment can inhibit creative development. Authoritarian parenting has been linked to lower creative tendencies in children. Studies show a positive correlation between parenting style, creative self-efficacy, and creativity, emphasizing the importance of further research in this area. In summary, this study supposes that the perceived parental rearing style has a positive effect on the creativity tendency of college students (H1); the parental rearing style has a positive effect on the creative self-efficacy of college students as well (H2).

### **The Research of Relationship between Creative Self-Efficacy and Creativity Tendency**

Creative self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in their ability to generate novel and effective ideas in creative activities (Tierney & Farmer, 2000). It influences creative performance and problem-solving. Research shows that high creative self-efficacy leads to

more creative output (Brockhus et al., 2014). Increasing creative self-efficacy can enhance creative tendencies. In summary, this study posits that creative self-efficacy has a positive effect on the creativity tendency of college students (H3).

#### **Mediating Effect of Creative Self-efficacy**

According to Song & Wang (2021), creativity development is crucial for individuals and educational institutions. The parenting style of college students significantly influences their personality and creative self-efficacy, which in turn affects their creativity. A study was conducted on medical and non-medical students at Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine to explore the relationship between family upbringing, creative self-efficacy, and creativity. The research found that fathers' educational level impacts children's upbringing, and there are differences in creativity tendencies between medical and non-medical students. In a study by Wang et al. (2009), 473 fifth and sixth-grade students were surveyed to examine the relationship between family environment, creative self-efficacy, and creativity. The results showed that creative self-efficacy plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between family environment, creative personality tendency, and creative thinking (Wang et al., 2009). In summary, this study posits that creative self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the impact of perceived parental rearing styles on the creativity tendency of college students (H4).

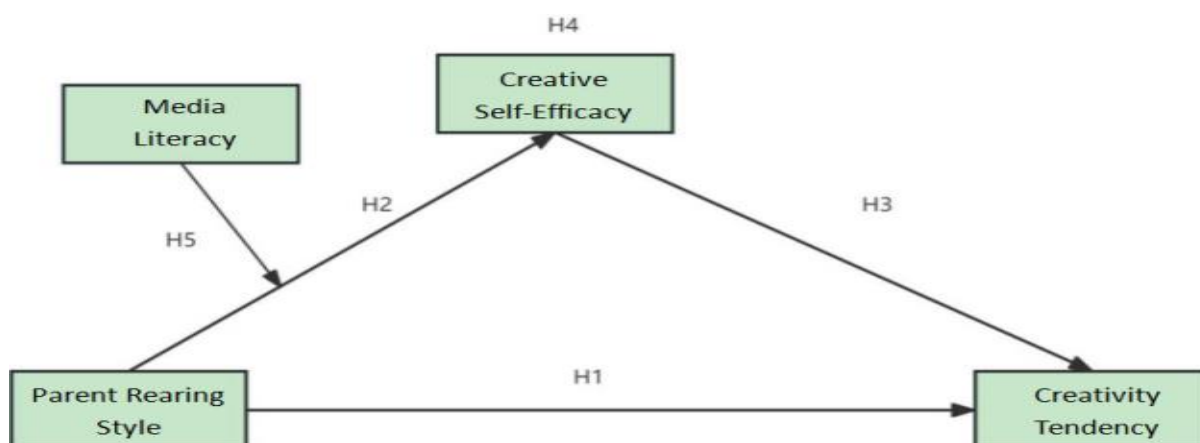
#### **Regulating Effect of Media Literacy**

Media literacy is the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate media content and communicate effectively using media (Potter, 2010; Lee & Chae, 2007). It is crucial in the digital age for navigating media resources and resisting misinformation (Zurkowski, 1974; Livingstone, 2004). Parenting style influences media literacy, with authoritative parents fostering the highest levels (Kellner & Share, 2007). Media literacy and self-efficacy are key factors in modern society, with high media literacy enhancing confidence and adaptability with technology (Austin et al., 2007; Williams, 1980). Media literacy also promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Studies show that media literacy education improves self-efficacy and creative tendencies in individuals (Jeong et al., 2012; Stein & Prewett, 2009; Potter, 2010; Hobbs, 2011). Therefore, according to the findings of previous research, this study supposes that media literacy acts as a moderator in the relationship between parenting style and creative tendency (H5).

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Model**

From the perspective of creative self-efficacy, this study explored the impact of parental rearing style on college students' creativity tendency. The specific research model is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Research Model

### Data Sources and Description

The data for this study were obtained from a questionnaire survey conducted by the author in February 2024 on students' learning situations in a college in Jiangxi Province. This survey was conducted by convenience sampling, 1008 questionnaires were distributed, and 1008 questionnaires were collected. After excluding 57 invalid questionnaires (including questionnaires with missing values and those with multiple consecutive questions selecting the same answer), 951 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective utilization rate of 94.3%. There were 459 female and 492 male students. This study involved four variables: parent-rearing style, creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency. Relevant data were measured using the Perceived Parent Rearing Style Scale, Creative Self-efficacy Scale, Media Literacy Scale, and Creativity Tendency Scale of college students.

1) Parent Rearing Style Scale: Based on the research objectives and subjects, this study revised the scale of research on parent-rearing styles developed by scholars (Ying et al., 2010). The revised scale contains 14 items across three dimensions. This study showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the total questionnaire was greater than 0.70, indicating the reliability of the questionnaire. The higher the score, the higher the degree to which the parents used this rearing style. In this study, the author analyzed the Cronbach's Alpha and AVE of the Parent Rearing Style Scale. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha and AVE of the parent-rearing style were 0.915 and 0.519, respectively, which were in line with the standards recommended by scholars. All standardized factor loadings were greater than 0.5, CR was greater than 0.6, and AVE was greater than 0.5, indicating that the scale had good reliability and validity.

2) Creative Self-Efficacy Scale: Based on the research objectives and subjects, this study used the Student Creative Self-Efficacy Scale developed by scholars (Hong & Lin, 2004) and (Qin et al., 2017). The scale measures creative self-efficacy across three dimensions: creative thinking and strategy beliefs, creative product beliefs, and anti-negative evaluation, totaling nine items. A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) was used for assessment, with higher scores indicating greater creative self-efficacy. The author assessed the scale's reliability and validity using Cronbach's Alpha and AVE (Table 1). The Creative Self-Efficacy Scale demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.827 and an AVE of 0.519, meeting reliability and validity standards. The College Students' Media Literacy Scale was revised to include three dimensions: acquisition literacy, assessment literacy, and competence literacy, with 12 measurement items. The scale demonstrated good reliability and validity based on Cronbach's Alpha and AVE analysis. The Creativity Tendency Scale was also revised for this study, featuring four dimensions and 15 measurement items. A 5-point Likert scale was used, with higher scores indicating a greater creativity tendency. The scale showed good reliability and validity based on Cronbach's Alpha and AVE analysis.

**Table 1** Reliability and Convergent Validity

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
Parent Rearing Style	0.915	0.922	0.519
Creative Self-efficacy	0.827	0.902	0.519
Media Literacy	0.844	0.933	0.563
Creativity Tendency	0.881	0.890	0.501

### Research Results & Discussion

This study utilized SPSS25.0 and AMOS22.0 for data analysis. The research involved measuring perceived parent rearing style, creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency in college students. The analysis included Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess reliability and validity of the variables, followed by Pearson's correlation to examine relationships between the variables. Prevention and post-inspection methods were used to

minimize errors in data collection. The analysis showed that there was no significant common method bias in the sample. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the mean and standard deviation of four variables: parent-rearing style, creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency. The scores for these variables were 3.265, 3.272, and 4.153, respectively. Pearson's correlation tests revealed significant positive correlations between parent-rearing style and college students' creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency. The results support the research hypothesis and suggest further verification through path analysis.

**Table 2** Basic Statistical Information

Variables	Basic Statistics			Correlation Coefficient			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Parent Rearing Style	Media Literacy	Creative Self-efficiency	Self-Creativity Tendency
Parent Rearing Style	3.870	0.605	951	1			
Media Literacy	3.272	0.388	951	.512**	1		
Creative Self-efficiency	3.265	0.394	951	.340**	.213**	1	
Creativity Tendency	4.153	0.435	951	.800**	.401**	.547**	1

Note: \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01; \*\*\*p < 0.001

With the parent rearing style as X, creativity tendency as Y, and creative self-efficacy as M, the SPSS 25.0 Macro Process V4.0 was used to set bootstrap sampling 5,000 times with a confidence interval of 95%. The model summary is shown in Table 3, which is divided into two models. The R-sq of Models 1 and 2 are the explanatory powers of the models, which are 0.120 and 0.725, respectively, indicating that the explanatory powers of Model 1 are 12% and 72.5%, respectively. What's more, the F-values are at the level of significance (p < 0.001), indicating that the two models own statistical significance (Chardon et al., 2016).

**Table 3** Summary Table of Mediating Model for Creative Self-efficacy

Models	Dependent Variables	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
1	M	0.346	0.120	0.137	42.895	3	947	0.000
2	Y	0.852	0.725	0.052	624.616	4	946	0.000

Note: M = Creative Self-Efficacy; Y = Creativity Tendency

As shown in Table 4, in Model 1 of the regression model, there was a significant positive relationship between parental rearing style and creative self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.213$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $CI = [0.173, 0.253]$ ), which is consistent with hypothesis H2. Therefore, H2 was supported. In Model 2, there was a significant positive relationship between parental rearing style and creativity tendency ( $\beta = 0.500$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $CI = [0.474, 0.526]$ ), which is consistent with H1. Therefore, H1 is supported. In addition, there was a significant positive relationship between creative self-efficacy and creativity tendency ( $\beta = 0.343$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $CI = [0.304, 0.383]$ ), which is consistent with H3. Therefore, H3 is supported.

**Table 4** Regression Analysis Table of Mediation Model for Creative Self-Efficacy

Models	Explanatory Variables	$\beta$	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
1	constant	2.486	0.092	26.910	0.000	2.305	2.667
	Gender	-0.047	0.024	-1.923	0.055	-0.095	0.001
	Grade	0.009	0.012	0.744	0.457	-0.015	0.033
	Parent Rearing Style	0.213	0.020	10.447	0.000	0.173	0.253

2	constant	1.109	0.076	14.666	0.000	0.960	1.257
	Gender	0.000	0.015	-0.004	0.997	-0.030	0.030
	Grade	-0.004	0.007	-0.527	0.598	-0.019	0.011
	Parent Rearing Style	0.500	0.013	37.643	0.000	0.474	0.526
	Creative Self-efficacy	0.343	0.020	17.152	0.000	0.304	0.383

Note: The dependent variable of Model 1 is creative self-efficacy, and the dependent variable of Model 2 is creativity tendency.

Table 5 shows that in Model 2, the direct effect of parent rearing style on creativity tendency is 0.500, with the confidence intervals of [0.474, 0.526]. The indirect effect of creative self-efficacy on parent rearing style and creativity tendency is 0.073, with confidence intervals of [0.059, 0.089], excluding 0. Therefore, the mediating effect exists and hypothesis H4 is supported. Creative self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between parent rearing style and creativity tendency, with a 12.8% mediating effect.

**Table 5** The Mediating Effect of Creative Self-efficacy on the Relationship Between Parent Rearing Style and Creativity Tendency

	Effect Size	Boot Standard Error	Boot CI Lower Limit	Boot CI Upper Limit	Percentage of Effect
Total Effect	0.573	0.014	0.545	0.601	
Direct Effect	0.500	0.013	0.474	0.526	87.2%
Indirect Effect	0.073	0.008	0.059	0.089	12.8%

With the parent rearing style as X, creative self-efficacy as M, creativity tendency as Y, and media literacy as W, the SPSS 25.0 Macro Process V4.0 was used to set bootstrap sampling 5,000 times with a confidence interval of 95%. After running, the model was divided into two. The R-sq of Models 1 and 2 are the explanatory powers of the models, which are 0.214 and 0.237, respectively, indicating that the explanatory powers of Model 1 were 21.4% and 23.7%, respectively. Furthermore, the F-values were at the level of significance ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that the two models were statistically significant (Table 6).

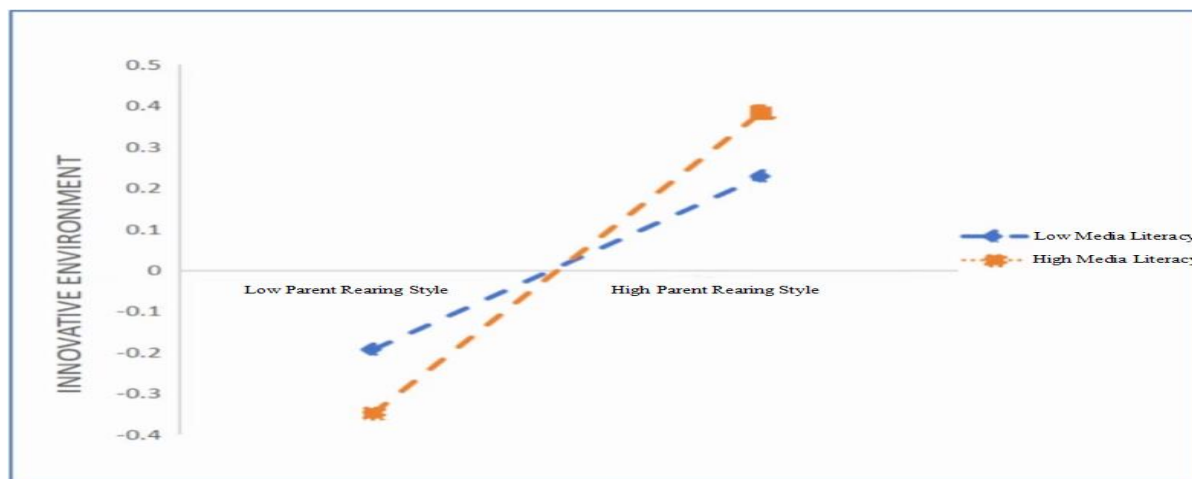
**Table 6** Summary Table of Moderating Model with Mediator for Creative Self-Efficacy

Models	Dependent Variable	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
1	M	0.357	0.128	0.136	27.630	5.000	945.000	0.000
2	Y	0.852	0.727	0.052	357.974	7.000	943.000	0.000

Note: M = Creative Self-efficacy; Y = Creativity Tendency.

After analyzing through process, medial literacy plays an analytical moderating effect in the regulatory interaction diagram between parent-rearing style and creative self-efficacy (Wen & Ye, 2014). As shown in Figure 2, the parent-rearing style had a significant positive predictive effect on creative self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.271$ ,  $SE = 0.039$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) at a high level of media literacy. At low levels of media literacy, parent rearing style had a significant predictive effect on creative self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.150$ ,  $SE = 0.030$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Compared to individuals with low media literacy, the data indicate that the parent-rearing style has a greater impact on the creative self-efficacy of students with high media literacy. The manuscript analyzes how parental rearing styles and societal influence affect college students' creativity using a mediated moderation model. The study surveyed 951 college students and used statistical methods and Structural Equation Modeling for analysis. Results show parental parenting styles positively impact creativity, with creative self-efficacy mediating and media literacy moderating this

relationship. The study's findings offer insights for educators, policymakers, and parents in nurturing creativity in college students. The study's limitations include its narrow focus on college students in Jiangxi Province, China, which may limit generalizability. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data from a questionnaire survey could introduce response bias and reduce depth of understanding. A more diverse and representative sample could enhance the study's findings.



**Figure 2** The Regulatory Interaction Diagram of Media Literacy between Parent Rearing Style and Creative Self-Efficacy

## Conclusion

This study confirmed that parental rearing style directly impacts college students' creativity tendency and explored the mediating role of creativity self-efficacy. Key findings include a positive correlation between parental rearing style, creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creativity tendency. Parental rearing style positively influences creativity tendency, with creative self-efficacy mediating this relationship. Media literacy also moderates the link between parental rearing style and creativity tendency. The study highlights the importance of a supportive parenting style in fostering students' creativity and confidence in problem-solving. The importance of parenting style in developing college students' creative self-efficacy, media literacy, and creative tendencies is crucial for enhancing their overall strength and improving undergraduate education. To achieve this, the following steps are recommended: 1) Parents should provide positive guidance and encouragement to nurture creativity in their children. 2) Schools should use innovative teaching methods to enhance students' creative self-efficacy and teamwork skills. 3) Students should improve their media literacy to effectively communicate and leverage their creative abilities. 4) Collaboration among parents, schools, and society is essential to cultivate creativity in college students and drive social innovation.

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**Data Availability Statement:** The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

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