

THE RELATION OF CHILD SELF-EVALUATION  
WITH PARENTING STYLE AND CLASSROOM  
ENVIRONMENT

By

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Abstract: Previous research has examined the relation between parenting style and adolescent self-efficacy. Furthermore, research has examined the link between the classroom environment and various child social, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes. However, research has yet to examine the relation between parenting styles and child self-efficacy for younger children, nor has it examined the relative influences of parenting styles and classroom environment on child self-efficacy. The purpose of the current study was to examine the relations among these variables for first grade students in order to inform efforts to support and strengthen child self-efficacy during the early school years. As part of the Family and Schools for Health (FiSH) project, 489 first grade students were interviewed at the beginning of their first grade year. Their self-perception was assessed using the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children (PSPCSAYC) and their perception of the socio-emotional classroom environment was assessed using the School as Community measure. Four hundred and eighty-nine parents (mostly mothers) completed questionnaires regarding their parenting styles at the beginning of the spring semester using the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ). Contrary to hypotheses, none of the three parenting styles was significantly related to child self-efficacy. Classroom environment, however, was found to be significantly positively related to child self-efficacy. Classroom environment was found to account for a significant amount of variance in child self-efficacy above that which was explained by each of the three parenting styles. Suggestions of future research are provided and implications for effective classroom and school-based interventions are discussed.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Positive child self-evaluations including self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-esteem have been shown to be predictive of a host of positive outcomes. The development of a child's self-esteem is a critical socio-emotional component of development that impacts many other areas of life. Children with positive self-esteem are shown to be better students, feel more accepted, and be less likely to engage in risky behaviors than other children (Rubin, 1999). Positive self-esteem predicts positive outcomes throughout childhood and into adulthood. In the early middle childhood years (i.e., from six to nine) children are in an important stage of their development of self (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008). Self-esteem is affected by a host of interactions with others (Rogoff, 1998). Peers, teachers, parents, and siblings are just a few of the many individuals who influence a child's self-esteem. Parents who invest time and energy into the lives of their children foster a positive sense of self-esteem. For example, physical availability, involvement, and quality of relationship with parents are each associated with self-esteem in adolescents (Bulanda & Majumdar, 2009). While the quality of the parent-child relationship is important, there is also evidence that parenting styles are related to overall well being in adolescents (Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter, & Keehn, 2007). There is less research specifically examining parenting styles and early childhood self-esteem; however, it can be assumed that there would be similar positive outcomes for younger children as well.

During early middle childhood, children are becoming more aware of themselves as individuals and how they interact with environmental influences around them. Because of the large amount of time spent in the classroom, the environment of the school can be an influential contributor to the child's developmental processes (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008). Similar to the family environment, a school or classroom that is nurturing and promotes individuality and positive relationships among students and their peers and teachers is likely to also be an influential factor in child self-esteem. According to Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, both teachers and parents can be prominent role models for children and enhance the child's overall sense of self. Two studies were found showing a relation between parenting styles and adolescents self-esteem, but there is less research on the effects of parenting style on child self-esteem and of the classroom socio-emotional environment on child self-esteem. If more about the relation between classroom socio-emotional environment and self-evaluation were known, researchers could better understand the predictors of positive self-evaluation in children and begin advocating for environments that foster this positive growth in children.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Self-Evaluation**

Self-esteem is defined as the feelings and assessments that people have about their own self-worth (Berk, 2002). One's sense of self-worth can influence behavior, competency, and overall socio-emotional development (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008). Depending on how people view themselves, this can impact how they act toward other people and in certain situations, the thoughts they have, and their overall feelings about self as a person and their ability to contribute as a functional member of society (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008).

Self-efficacy is defined as the judgments people hold about their capacities based on mastery experiences (Bandura, 1997). This is how a person views his or her ability to accomplish a task or achieve a goal. Self-efficacy may contribute to the motivation and efforts needed to achieve desired goals (Bandura, 1997). If people do not feel like they will be able to achieve a goal based on their view of their personal ability, they could be less inclined to want to even start the task at hand. One's perceived self-efficacy could be different across a variety of situations and interactions (Caprara, Alessandri, Barbaranelli, & Vecchione, 2013). In some areas, people might think of their abilities as exceptional, while other situations might cause individuals to perceive their abilities as subpar. According to Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, one's self-efficacy

can be enhanced through encouragement by others. Parents, teachers, and peers all have influence on one's self-efficacy. Bandura proposes that self-efficacy influences how people respond to challenges, goals, and various life obstacles that people face. According to Bandura, when outside influences in a child's life continuously tell a child that he or she can succeed, this increases the child's self-efficacy.

Self-concept is one's overall view of his or herself. Positive self-concept is linked to overall later adjustment and life satisfaction (Heubner, 1991), school adaptation (Verschueren, Byuck, & Marcoen, 2001), and academic achievement (Guay, Marsh, & Boivin, 2003). Two contexts that have the greatest influence on children are family and school, and thus likely have the greatest impact on child self-evaluation. While we are somewhat limited in what we know about the specific influences of the school setting, we know that parental appraisal of adolescent competency is a predictor of self-esteem (Margolin, Blyth, & Carbone, 1988). Specifically, when parents praise their children for their knowledge or abilities this heightens a child's self-esteem. Another predictor of self-esteem is the type of parenting styles used in the family.

### **Impact of Parenting Style on Child Self-Evaluation**

There are a number of family influences that have been shown to have an important impact on child development and child outcomes. One area that is particularly influential is parenting style. Parenting styles differ from parenting practices in that parenting style is an overall attitude toward the child and the parent-child relationship, which can be expressed through various parenting practices. Parenting style describes parent-child interaction across a wide variety of situations (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Parenting style can also include nonverbal interactions and reactions to the child like tone of voice or attentiveness. In contrast, parenting practices are behaviors that are used to reach specific goals (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Attending sporting events or using various discipline techniques are examples of parenting practices. Baumrind (1996) described three different types of parenting styles. Authoritative parenting is characterized by warmth and consistency from the parent, and discipline that is not

harsh or critical. Authoritative parenting is high in demandingness, but balanced by also being high in responsiveness. Authoritarian parenting is inconsistent, disengaged, and highly punitive. Authoritarian parents are high in their demandingness, but low in responsiveness. Permissive parenting is the third type of parenting style that includes low supervision of the child. Permissive parents are more likely to want to just be friends with their children rather than parents. Permissive parents are high in their responsiveness, but low in demandingness. Maccoby and Martin (1984) added a fourth parenting style for those parents who are low in responsiveness and low in demandingness. Maccoby and Martin renamed Baumrind's permissive parenting style to be an indulgent parent. The fourth parenting style added is called uninvolved. Uninvolved parents are more likely to be neglectful parents. For the purpose of this study, only Baumrind's original three parenting styles were assessed.

Authoritative parenting and key dimensions of authoritative parenting are shown to be related to many positive outcomes in children. For example, parental warmth and autonomy granting, both characteristics of authoritative parenting, have been shown to be positively predictive of autonomy (Baumrind & Black, 1967), negatively correlated with behavioral problems, and positively correlated with psychosocial development and academic competence (Gray & Steinberg, 1999). Additionally, parental warmth has been shown to correlate with positive affect regulation for children (Davidov & Grusec, 2006). Authoritative parenting has also been shown to be associated with secure attachments between children and their caregivers (Karavasilis, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 2003). In adolescents, an authoritative parenting style is predictive of higher clinical, school, and personal adjustment (Panetta, Somers, Ceresnie, Hillman, & Partridge, 2014). Conversely, low parental warmth and high parental control, both characteristics of authoritarian parenting, are predictive of negative outcomes such as lower perceived competence in boys (Anderson & Hughes, 1989) and higher reactivity and disruptive play with peers (Gagnon et al., 2014).

No studies could be located which looked at the relation between parenting style and child self-efficacy in young children. Two studies were found focusing on adolescent samples and the relation between parenting style and overall self-concept. One study by Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter, and Keehn (2007) included 272 students in ninth through eleventh grade. Maternal and paternal parenting styles were assessed separately using the Authoritative Parenting Measure (Steinberg, et al., 1994). Psychological adjustment was measured using assessments of self-esteem, depression, and life satisfaction. Self-esteem was measured with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965), depression was assessed through the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Short Depression Scale (Andresen, Malmgren, Carter, & Patrick, 1994; Radloff, 1977), and student life satisfaction was measured using a 1 to 7 scale assessing overall satisfaction of life. Milevsky et al. (2007) found that authoritative parenting was related to higher self-esteem and life satisfaction and to lower depression in adolescents. This study highlights the importance of parenting style and its relation to child overall self-concept.

The second study by McClunn and Merrell (1998) included 198 students in eighth through ninth grade and examined adolescents' self-concept and their perception of their parents' parenting style. The Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988) was used to measure perceived competency or adequacy of the adolescents in the sample. The authors used the Perceived Parenting Style Survey to assess for perceived parenting style. McClunn and Merrell (1998) found that adolescents who perceived their parents' parenting style to be authoritative had the highest ratings of self-concept when compared to their peers from authoritarian and permissive parents. These findings corroborate the findings from Milevsky et al. (2007) by highlighting the positive relation between authoritative parents on child self-perception.

Three studies were located which examined the relation between parenting practices and child self-evaluation. These studies found that there are many parenting practices that are similar to components of authoritative parenting style that appear to promote positive self-evaluation in children. Parent reports of support and monitoring are positively correlated with parent report of

positive child adjustment and higher school grades, fewer behavioral problems, and child report of higher self-esteem and higher grades in children ages 5-11 (Amato & Fowler, 2002).

Tramonte, Gauthier, and Willms (2015) found a positive relation between parental engagement and guidance and child cognitive and behavioral development in six-year-old children. For girls, more controlling parental attitudes were associated with higher self-reported peer acceptance; conversely, this same parenting attitude was associated with lower self-reported perceived cognitive competence in boys (Anderson & Hughes, 1989). This finding may be due to the differences in socialization between boys and girls in American culture in that boys benefit more from greater autonomy while girls thrive more socially on peer acceptance.

Additionally, there have been various parenting behaviors and beliefs that have been shown to promote self-esteem and self-efficacy. Many variables have been studied and found to be positively related to positive child self-evaluation. These variables include: parent emotional warmth and supportiveness (e.g., Connell, Halpern-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995; Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002; Wagner & Phillips, 1992), involvement and monitoring of school activities and performance (Clark, 1993; Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994; Eccles, 1993; Schneider & Coleman, 1993; Steinberg et al., 1992; Stevenson, Chen, & Uttal, 1990).

The literature shows a clear connection between parenting practices and child positive self-evaluation. A small body of literature has examined the relation between parenting styles and adolescent self-esteem indicating that authoritative parenting is related to higher levels of self-esteem in adolescents (Milevsky et al., 2007). When parents show consistency in their warmth and stray from using harsh discipline techniques children respond better and have a greater sense of self-worth. While there were a few studies found examining the influence of parenting styles on adolescents, no studies could be located which examine the relation between parenting styles and younger children's self-esteem. Although research has not yet examined this relation in children, it is likely that the same influences of warm, supportive parenting that is absent of harsh discipline would also promote higher self-evaluation among younger children.

### **Impact of Classroom Environment on Child Self-Evaluation**

It has been shown that families have a significant influence on child outcomes; however, the classroom is another important environment that could potentially influence child self-evaluation. The school classroom is a place where children spend a large amount of their time during the week. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1977; 1986) ecological theory, the school is another layer of influence in the life of a child that should be considered when holistically understanding a child's development. A positive classroom environment is one that students view as a community. This community concept means that the classroom members know and care about one another, and actively collaborate as a group with their teacher in classroom decision making process (Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps, & Delucchi, 1996). One type of classroom that is shown to predict positive child outcomes is the learner-centered classroom. Teachers using learner-centered practices individualize their instruction to meet the developmental needs of each student, use a more hands-on and experiential approach to learning, and place a strong focus on the social climate of the classroom (Donohue, Perry, & Weinstein, 2003). Teachers' approach in these classrooms can also be referred to as developmentally appropriate practice. Teachers with a learner-centered approach see the classroom environment as a strong contributor to the growth and learning of the students. They create an environment that fosters a positive self-esteem and a love for learning. In this approach, teachers take into consideration the developmental age and the needs of each individual child when planning their lessons (Burts et al., 1992).

Another type of teaching style is teacher-directed learning. This type of learning is more traditional in nature and uses a standard curriculum to teach all students in the class. In this approach, teachers create lessons that are assessed through paper and pencil type activities that are generalized to a particular grade level. Students in these classrooms are more likely to be seen sitting at their desks completing a worksheet, as opposed to experiencing and constructing their own learning through hands-on activities (Bredekamp, 1987). Proponents of developmentally appropriate practices would call this developmentally inappropriate.

Learner-centered classroom environments have been shown to predict a host of positive academic outcomes including higher scores on achievement tests (Brock, Nishida, Chiong, Grimm, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2007; Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn, 1995), higher teacher and self-reports of academic competence (Brock et al., 2007), intrinsic academic motivation, and higher reading comprehension scores indicating higher orders of learning (Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schlaps, & Delucchi, 1996). Much of the research focused on classroom and school environment has been focused on academic outcomes. However, the classroom environment has also been shown to be an important predictor of a number of socio-emotional outcomes for children.

Learner-centered classrooms promote peer relationship formation and provide social support for children as they learn to play cooperatively with other students (Barth, Dunlap, Dane, Lochman, & Wells, 2004; Brock et al., 2007; Donohue, Perry & Weinstein, 2003; Gest, Madill, Zadzora, Miller, & Roadkin, 2014; Jambunathan, Burts, & Pierce, 1999; Jambunthan, 2012; Solomon et al., 1996). Additionally, children in learner-centered classrooms have been shown to have fewer stress behaviors (Burts et al., 1992), and have lower levels of peer aggression (Barth et al., 2004; Gest et al. 2014). These children are also shown to have more positive views of self, including higher rates of self-efficacy and self-esteem (Jambunthan, 2012; Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008; Smith & Croom, 2000; Solomon et al. 1996; Stipek et al., 1995). Below is a more in-depth review of the research examining the socio-emotional outcomes of classroom environments. These include peer relationships, aggression and behavior problems, and self-efficacy.

Researchers at University of Virginia examined the emotional climate of the classroom and its influence on children. They developed an observational assessment to measure the emotional climate of infant through high school classrooms called the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Harme 2008). These researchers primarily studied the use of the CLASS measure and outcomes of student achievement, but do not focus on child

self-evaluation outcomes. However, in studying the CLASS measure, it is found that the emotional climate of the classroom can be fostered through the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the child. The teacher-child relationship is one aspect of the classroom environment that has also been found to influence child self-evaluation.

### **Peer Relationships**

Seven studies have been identified that examined the relation between the classroom environment and/or peer relationships and social supports. It has been found that greater use of developmentally appropriate practice promotes peer acceptance and more positive feelings overall about the classroom environment and about working together with peers (Barth et al., 2004; Brock et al., 2007; Donohue et al., 2003; Gest et al., 2014; Jambunathan et al., 1999; Jambunathan, 2012; Solomon et al., 1996). Donohue et al. (2003) conducted a study using 14 first grade classrooms to understand the effects of learner-centered practices on peer relations. Teachers in the study provided behavior ratings and academic skills evaluations for each of the students participating in the study. Trained observers evaluated the extent to which teacher practices were learner-centered using the Early Childhood Classroom Observation Measure. Donohue et al. (2003) found that the more learner-centered the environment, the greater the child outcomes. In this study, students in classrooms that were observed to have more learner-centered practices were shown to have a greater affective response towards their peers, even when peers were being disruptive or deviant. Students in classrooms with more learner-centered practices had few interpersonal conflicts and lower rates of peer rejection. Students saw their classroom peers as friends and were able to work and play cooperatively with each other.

Jambunathan, Burts, and Pierce (1999) examined the relation of developmentally appropriate practice and child perceived self-competence. Jambunathan et al. (1999) recruited participants from seven early childhood centers across the country. There were 91 children in this study, ages ranging from 3 to 5. Children were interviewed to determine their perceived self-competence using the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Self-Competence and Social Acceptance



(Harter & Pike, 1984). Classrooms of the students participating in the study were examined for use of developmentally appropriate practice using the Checklist Rating for Developmentally Appropriate Classrooms in Early Childhood Classrooms (Charlesworth et al., 1993). Jambunathan et al. (1999) found that peer acceptance was strongly predicted by greater teacher use of developmentally appropriate practice with clear curriculum goals and use of teaching strategies to motivate students and guide socio-emotional development. Jambunathan et al. (1999) concluded that the use of developmentally appropriate practices allows for an environment where children feel comfortable about working with their peers and learning from them.

Additionally, Jambunathan (2012) studied the relationship between the use of developmentally appropriate practices in Head Start classrooms and children's perceived self-competence. There were 72 children who participated in the study, with ages ranging from 3-5 years. Six Head Start centers were used from the Southern portion of the United States. Trained researchers observed the use of developmentally appropriate practice in classrooms and conducted the interviews with participating children. The Rating Scale was used to measure the use of Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Classrooms (Buchanan et al., 1997). Children's self-competence was measured using the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Self-Competence and Social Acceptance (Harter & Pike, 1984). Jambunathan (2012) found that peer acceptance was significantly related to creating a caring community of learners. When children were in an environment that fostered care between students in the classroom, they felt more accepted by their peers.

Barth et al. (2004) examined the influence of classroom environment on aggression, peer relations, and academic focus in fourth graders. There were 1,382 children included in the study from 65 different classrooms in 17 schools. The following year, data were also collected on 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who had participated as a part of the original intervention group. Five hundred eighty-nine fifth grade students were included in the study. Teachers completed the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation-Revised (TOCA-R; Werthamer-Larsson, Kellam, &

Wheeler, 1991) about frequency of 16 different behaviors (almost never to almost always) in children. Overall negative classroom environment scores were comprised of the class average of scores on aggression (higher), peer relations (lower), and academic focus (lower). Barth et al. (2004) found that ratings of a poorer classroom environment were associated with poorer peer relations.

Gest et al. (2014) studied the overall social dynamics of first, third, and fifth grade classrooms. A total of 54 classrooms consisting of 1,063 students participated in the study. Assessments were administered three times in a single school year. Students completed surveys examining their sense of peer community, school bonding and motivation, and peer nominations of behavioral descriptors. Two researchers observed teacher-child interactions using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008). At the end of the year, teachers were interviewed on their self-reported social dynamics management strategies, importance for teaching, reasons for non-involvement, and sources of information. Gest et al. (2014) found that teachers who reported making efforts to manage social status and friendship formation in the classrooms had students who experienced their classroom as more of a community with their peers. Additionally, teachers who reported high levels of responsive teaching and high levels of promoting social behavior had high rates of students reporting experiencing their classroom as a community.

Two studies were found that analyzed the effectiveness of specific interventions that aimed to create a more learner-centered environment. These interventions included implementation of specific programs in the classroom to promote a positive classroom environment. Brock et al. (2007) conducted a study to analyze how teachers using a *Responsive Classroom* approach influences child outcomes. *Responsive Classroom (RC)* is a classroom intervention using learner-centered practices that integrates social and academic learning. Brock et al. (2007) aimed to understand how using the *RC* approach would improve children's outcomes. The study included 520 children, comprising three different cohorts of third graders.

The authors collected data for three years. Fifty-one teachers also participated in the study. Teachers filled out the Classroom Practices Measure to assess for their use of the *RC* approach. Researchers conducted classroom observations to provide convergent validity for the teachers' self-reports of their own practices. Children participating in the study completed the School-Related Attitudes questionnaire to assess children's perceptions of their learning environment. Brock et al. (2007) found that teachers who used more *RC* practices had students with better social outcomes of self-control, cooperation, and assertion, and those students viewed their school environment in a more positive way.

Solomon et al. (1996) examined the implementation of the CDP program on how students experience their classrooms as communities. In this study, six schools were analyzed following students from grades 4 through 6, with two of the schools using the CDP program and two schools providing their normal classroom programs or curricula. The sample size in grade 4 was 173 students from seven classrooms in program schools and 163 students from six classrooms in comparison schools. Solomon et al. (1996) administered a questionnaire to assess students' sense of community in their classroom. Trained researchers also observed sense of community in two-hour increments, eight different times, and this observation was highly correlated with the student measure. Prosocial skills, values, and concerns were measured through an interview with individual students based on their responses to hypothetical situations and through additional questionnaires. Personal feelings such as loneliness and self-esteem were assessed through student questionnaires. Solomon et al. (1996) found that students in the program group rated their classroom as a community much higher than those in the comparison group. In grade 4, program students that had the highest sense of community scores also had the best outcome scores for conflict resolution and democratic values. In grade 5, a positive sense of community was related to liking school and intrinsic prosocial motivation. In grade 6, a positive sense of community was related to perspective taking, and intrinsic prosocial motivation. For program students, there was also less loneliness and social anxiety. These findings suggest that students experiencing their

classrooms as communities experience many positive outcomes. Further, it suggests that use of the CDP program is one effective way at creating that environment.

Van Horn, Karlin, and Ramey (2012) studied the impact of developmentally appropriate practice on parent rating of child social skills and problem behavior. The study included 1,145 first graders, 2,003 second graders, and 2,111 third graders from different schools across the United States. Developmentally appropriate practice was measured using A Developmentally Appropriate Practices Template (ADAPT; Gottlieb, 1995, 1997). Social skills were measured using the Social Skills Rating System parent forms (SSRS; Gresham & Elliott, 1990). The behavior items were not included for first grade parents. For first graders, Van Horn et al. (2012) found no impact of developmentally appropriate practice on social skills. None of the developmentally appropriate practice classroom components significantly predicted any of the social skills components in second or third graders. Van Horn et al. (2012) used parent report of social skills in their study, which assumes that classroom social skills would translate into social skills observed by parents outside of the classroom. Other studies used different sources to measure social skills, such as observational measures and different reporters, likely contributing to different outcomes.

From these studies reviewed, most found that developmentally appropriate practice positively influenced child relational and social outcomes with their peers. These outcomes include fewer interpersonal conflicts among peers (Donohue et al., 2003), greater peer acceptance (Jambunthan et al., 1999; Jambunthan, 2012), higher rates of student reports of experiencing their classrooms as communities (Gest et al., 2014), greater self-control, cooperation, and assertion (Brock et al., 2007), and less loneliness and social anxiety (Solomon et al., 1996). However, Van Horn et al. (2012) failed to replicate these findings. The literature reviewed also has limitations of lacking random assignment to classroom, which is a threat to internal validity. Students were assigned to classrooms by the school district rather than the researchers. This means that while specific classrooms can be randomly assigned to interventions, there is no randomization or

equalization of the students in those classrooms. Conversely, a strength of the literature is that there were similar findings across many studies that used various measurement types.

Additionally, the findings were consistent across samples of all sizes, ranging from 72 to over 1,000 participants.

### **Child Behavior**

Child behavior is another factor that can be influenced by a positive classroom environment. Both internalizing behavior, such as anxiety, and externalizing behavior, such as acting out, can be managed more effectively in a positive classroom environment. Three studies examined the relationship between child classroom environment and child behavior. This research indicates that children in developmentally appropriate classrooms are found to have fewer stress behaviors (Burts et al., 1992), lower rates of aggression (Barth et al., 2004; Gest et al. 2014), and greater academic focus (Barth et al., 2004).

There is evidence that classroom environment can contribute to child aggression. Children in developmentally appropriate classrooms are found to have lower rates of aggression (Barth et al., 2004; Gest et al. 2014). Barth et al. (2004) argue that classroom composition can also influence individual child behavior, whereas, a classroom with more aggressive children would produce more overall aggressive outcomes by providing a lower behavioral expectation for the class. According to Barth et al. (2004), based on Social Learning Theory, children learn from each other and are influenced by the poor behavior of their peers. In classrooms with more aggressive behaviors, teachers might be more harsh and punitive, attending more to negative behaviors than positive behaviors, thus eliminating a positive model for children to follow. Gest et al. (2014) studied first, third, and fifth grade students and found that teachers who used more strategies to manage aggression had lower levels of student reported peer aggression. While these classroom management techniques are not specifically unique to learner-centered classrooms, one of the primary strategies of learner-centered classrooms is to promote a positive socio-emotional environment that caters to the individual needs of each child. With this approach, the behavioral

outcomes of the children would be healthier because both the teacher and the classroom environment are meeting the child's other developmental needs.

A study by Burts et al. (1992) examined the two teaching approaches to understand the prevalence of stress behaviors of children in both developmentally appropriate and developmentally inappropriate settings. Six developmentally appropriate classrooms of 103 children and six developmentally inappropriate classrooms of 101 children were used in this study. Teachers were given the Teacher Questionnaire (Burts, et al., 1990) measuring teacher beliefs and instructional activities. Researchers using the Checklist for Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Kindergarten Classrooms (Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, & Kirk, 1990) also observed teachers on two to three separate occasions for at least three hours each time. The Classroom Child Stress Behavior Instrument (Burts et al., 1990) is a scan sampling procedure that was used to assess children's stress behavior. Burts et al. (1992) found that children in appropriate classrooms displayed fewer overall stress behaviors than those in inappropriate classrooms. More stress behaviors took place in inappropriate classrooms during times of transitions and workbook/worksheet activities. While outside contextual factors can play into the demonstration of stress behaviors, children were randomly put into their Kindergarten classrooms by the school district, which helps account for some of the contextual variability that might be present. This helps validate the findings because it indicates that results were likely a result of classroom practices and not a result of bias in classroom assignment.

These studies show that teacher use of developmentally appropriate classroom management practices and creation of a developmentally appropriate learning environment can reduce aggression and stress behaviors in children in the classroom. A strength of these studies is the variation of measurement types that creates reliability across findings. Observation, self-report, and teacher report measures were used in these studies which helps increase the generalizability of the findings.

### **Child Self-Evaluation**

In addition to peer, social, and behavioral outcomes, student self-evaluation and self-esteem are predicted by use of developmentally appropriate practices that foster a positive socio-emotional environment. Two different types of child self-evaluation have been shown to be related to the child's classroom environment. These include academic self-efficacy and overall self-esteem. Academic self-efficacy was found in classrooms where teachers endorsed higher levels of developmentally appropriate practice (Jambunthan, 2012; Smith & Croom, 2000; Stipek et al., 1995). Additionally, a positive classroom environment is shown to predict higher levels of overall self-esteem (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008; Solomon et al. 1996).

Smith and Croom (2000) took a somewhat different approach to measuring child self-concept by looking at it in relation to teacher beliefs about developmentally appropriate practice instead of actual classroom behavior. Fifty-one second grade children from 14 urban Nebraska schools and their teachers were included in this study. Smith and Croom (2000) used the Self Dimension Questionnaire to assess for children's self-concept. Teacher beliefs about developmentally appropriate practice were assessed using the Primary Teacher Questionnaire. The authors found that academic self-concept and general school self-concept were predicted by teacher scores showing stronger endorsement of traditional practices. However, there was an inverse relationship between teacher endorsement of developmentally appropriate practice and girls' self-concept of physical ability. It is unclear why Smith and Croom (2000) found this unexpected result, but the finding may be a function of the teachers holding a high endorsement for both traditional and developmentally appropriate practices, meaning they reported doing both types of practices in their classrooms. This finding could influence the generalization of the study because these teachers were learning the concepts of developmentally appropriate practice while the study was taking place. A limitation of this study is that only teacher beliefs were measured and there was no measurement over actual teacher classroom practices.

Stipek et al. (1995) compared the two different teaching approaches to understand the effects on a child's overall achievement and motivation. The study was conducted with 123

students from didactic and 104 students from child-centered preschool and kindergarten classrooms. Trained observers stayed in the classrooms for 2-3 hours to distinguish child-centered versus didactic settings. Additionally, researchers also interviewed the children to assess the children's perception of their abilities. Children in child-centered programs perceived their abilities as much greater and had higher expectations for their success than did children who were in didactic programs. Children in the child-centered programs were significantly more likely to pick tasks of higher difficulty compared to the children in didactic programs. Children in didactic programs were more likely to ask for permission or approval from the experimenter, showing dependency, but they were less likely to show overall pride in their work and rated their anxiety about school significantly higher than those in child-centered programs.

Maxwell and Chmielewski (2008) examined how personalization of the physical classroom environment influences child self-esteem. Thirty-eight kindergarten and first grade students from K-1 classrooms in a rural district were used in the study. Teachers in classrooms chosen to receive the personalization intervention implemented one of eight projects given by the researchers in order to make the classroom environment more meaningful to the children. Children in these classrooms were compared to children in control classrooms where teachers were told to keep their physical environments constant throughout the study. Teachers completed the Children's Inventory of Self-Esteem (Anon., 2001) on students participating in the study. Researchers administered the Self-Esteem Index (Brown & Alexander, 1991) to participating students. Teachers and students were assessed once the original level of personalization was implemented in the classrooms and again after the 4-week treatment period ended. The authors found that students in the intervention group experienced an increase in their teacher-reported self-esteem, while students in the control group had no changes in their teacher-reported self-esteem. Additionally, first graders experienced an increase in their self-reported self-esteem after receiving personalization. Similarly, Solomon et al. (1996) found that when fourth grade students perceived their classrooms as communities it had a positive effect on social competence,



empathy, and self-esteem. Therefore, it appears that classroom personalization could potentially add to a student's perception of experiencing their classroom as a community.

An additional study found that teaching to enhance learning and development through use of developmentally appropriate practice was related to cognitive competence. Jambunthan (2012) studied Head Start programs and concluded that when teachers promote hands-on learning and scaffold to promote independence in problem solving, the children feel much more competent in accomplishing cognitive goals. Conversely, Jambunthan et al. (1999) found no significant associations between developmentally appropriate classroom and child report of physical or cognitive self-competence in their study of 3-5 year old children.

While many studies suggest that classroom environment and developmentally appropriate practice can lead to greater self-esteem and self-efficacy, Jambunthan et al. (1999) produced contradicting findings. Jambunthan et al. (1999) found no predictors of child self-efficacy in the child's classroom. This could be because of the limited sample size and few classrooms that participated in the study. Smith and Croom (2000) only focused on teacher beliefs about traditional and developmentally appropriate practices, and did not report on the actual approaches that were used in the classroom. Stipek et al. (1995) used both observational measures of classroom environment and child self-report on perceived outcomes, which strengthens the findings of this study. Maxwell and Chmielewski (2008) used both teacher and student report of self-esteem to corroborate their findings. Future studies should examine the use of developmentally appropriate practice as a predictor of child self-esteem and self-efficacy using larger sample sizes with diverse populations to understand the overall influence the socio-emotional environment has on the development of the child.

Two studies were found that specifically examine the teacher-child relationship and child self-evaluation. Leflot, Onghena, and Colpin (2010) used a second grade sample to examine how teacher-child interactions influence child self-esteem. They found teacher involvement, structure, and autonomy granting were found to be related to an increase in student social self-concept.

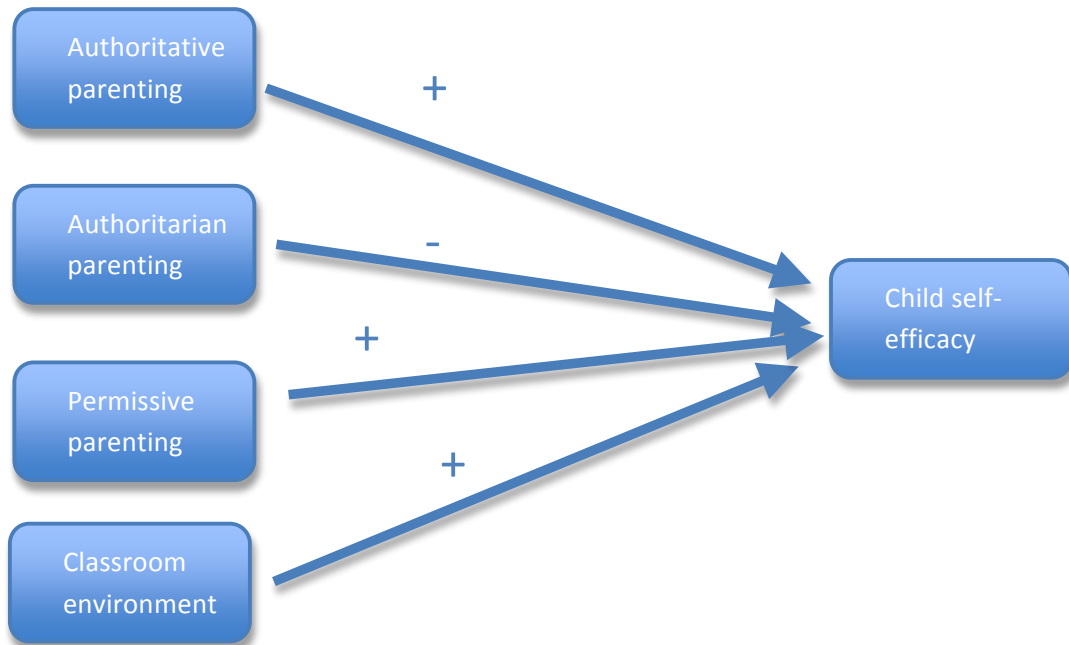
Additionally, teacher autonomy granting was also related to an increase in academic self-concept. Split, van Lier, Leflot, Onghena, and Colpin (2014) also used a second grade sample to examine how teachers and peers influence child perceived social self-concept. They found that peer rejection was related to a decrease in social self-concept, but the teacher support in the life of the student served as a buffer in the effects of peer rejection, minimizing the negative effects on a child's social self-concept.

### **Summary and Hypotheses**

Parenting style and practices have been shown to be related to child self-evaluation. Particularly, positive parenting practices are shown to promote positive child and adolescent self-evaluation. The classroom environment has been shown to influence many different outcomes in children. A developmentally appropriate classroom environment is shown to foster a positive socio-emotional environment which promotes positive child self-evaluation, fewer behavioral problems, and positive peer relationships. The literature is lacking in terms of studies examining the relation between parenting style and child self-evaluation. Additionally, only three studies were located that examined the relation between developmentally appropriate classroom environments and child self-evaluation. A larger sample size would add to the literature about the influence of the classroom environment on child self-evaluation. Research has yet to examine the relative contributions of the classroom socio-emotional environment and parenting in predicting child self-evaluation. Because the classroom and the home are the two primary contexts in which children grow, it is important to understand their relative influence on the development of child positive self-evaluation. The current study aims to examine four hypotheses. First, parents higher on authoritative parenting style will have children who will report having higher global child self-efficacy. Second, parents higher on authoritarian parenting style will have children who will report having lower global child self-efficacy. Third, parents higher on permissive parenting will have children who will report having higher global child self-efficacy. Fourth, classroom

environment will be significantly related to child self-efficacy. Specifically, children who perceive a more supportive classroom environment will report having higher self-efficacy.

Finally, the study will examine one research question: Does the supportiveness of child classroom environment explain a significant amount of variance in child self-efficacy above that which is explained by parenting style?



*Figure 1.* Hypothesized relations between parenting style, classroom environment, and child self-efficacy.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Participants**

Data were gathered as part of a longitudinal study called the Families & School for Health (FiSH) Project (Harrist, Kennedy, Topham, Hubbs-Tait, & Page, 2005). The study consisted of children at 29 schools in 20 towns in rural Oklahoma. A total of 1171 children across two cohorts participated in the study. Families were recruited for the study by researchers who attended school events and a letter was sent home with the first grade students explaining the nature of the study. The sample used in this study was a subsample of children whose parents completed questionnaires, and consisted of 489 children. The race/ethnicity of the children was 75.1% Euro-American, 17.6% American Indian, and 7.4% other (See Table 1). The schools used were rural, and each town except for two had a population of 10,000 or less. Data were collected from parent-child dyads. A small compensation was given as incentive for completion of the questionnaires from parents.

#### **Procedure**

Trained graduate and undergraduate research assistants conducted one-on-one interviews at the beginning and end of the child's first grade school year (waves 1 and 2). Interviews were conducted again at the end of the child's second through fourth grade years (waves 3 to 5). Interviews were held for about one hour in quiet areas in the elementary schools to ensure

privacy. Interview questions relevant to this particular study included topic areas covering the children's self-evaluation and the evaluation of their classroom socio-emotional environment. In the spring semester of the child's first grade year, parents of interviewed children were sent a questionnaire packet by mail or from the school to complete. They were sent questionnaires at the beginning and end of the spring semester (waves 1 and 2). Only completed and returned packets were used in data collection. The University Institutional Review Board approved the project. Verbal approval of the project was provided by the superintendents; principals, teachers, and parents each provided written informed consent; and assent was given by the children prior to participating in the study. For this study, wave 1 of parent data and wave 1 of student data were used.

## Measures

### Parenting Styles

The Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ; Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, & Hard, 2001) is a parent-report instrument answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always). The questionnaire is composed of 32 items including three parenting styles subscales: *Authoritative* (15 items measuring autonomy granting, reasoning/induction, warmth and support; e.g., "I know the name of my child's friends," "I give praise when our child is good"); *Authoritarian* (12 items measuring physical coercion, non reasoning, and verbal hostility; e.g., "I argue with our child," "I yell or shout when our child misbehaves"); *Permissive* (5 items measuring indulgence; e.g., "I state punishments to our child but do not actually do them," "I bribe our child with rewards to bring about compliance"). Scores were computed for each parenting style by calculating the mean of the items. High scores represent higher levels of the respective parenting style. The PDSQ has been shown to be reliable and valid among parents of preschool and school-age children (Porter et al., 2005). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  in the current sample was .84 for *Authoritative*, .75 for *Authoritarian*, and .71 for *Permissive*.

### Self-Evaluation

The Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children (PSPCSAYC; Harter & Pike, 1984) is a 24-item child-report instrument including four subscales, with six items each: cognitive competence (e.g., “This girl isn’t very good at numbers/is pretty good at numbers” “This girl knows lots of things in school/doesn’t know very many things in school”), physical competence (e.g., “This girl isn’t very good at swinging by herself/is pretty good at swinging by herself” “This girl is pretty good at climbing/isn’t very good at climbing”), peer acceptance (e.g., “This girl has lots of friends to play with/doesn’t have very many friends to play with” “A few kids share their toys with this girl/Many kids share their toys with this girl”), and maternal acceptance (e.g., “Mom usually doesn’t let her eat dinner at friend’s houses/usually lets her eat dinner at friend’s houses” “Mom takes her to a lot of places that she likes to go/doesn’t take her to very many places she likes to go”). Physical competence, cognitive competence, and peer acceptance subscales were used in the current study. Items and response sets are pictorial because this instrument is for children. Each item was scored on a 4-point scale, with 4 being the highest level of perceived acceptance or competence. Subscale values were computed by calculating the mean score of child responses. Higher subscale totals represent a greater sense of competence or acceptance. For the purpose of this study, a global self-efficacy score was used by taking the mean of the combined subscale items. Harter and Pike (1984) tested reliability of this measure and found alpha coefficients for subscales to range from .53 to .83. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  in the current sample for the global self-efficacy score was .83.

### **Classroom Socio-Emotional Environment**

The students’ sense of experiencing their classroom as a community was measured using the School as Community measure consisting of 38 items (internal consistence [ $\alpha$ ] = .91; Battistich & Hom, 1997) including two subscales: caring and supportive interpersonal relationships in the classroom (e.g., “Students in my class treat each other with respect,” “Students in my class help each other learn”), and student autonomy and influence on classroom norm setting and decision making (e.g., “In my class the students get to help plan what they will

do,” “In my class the teacher and the students work together to plan what we will do”). Item responses were based on a 5-point Likert scale (1= “disagree a lot” or “never” and 5= “agree a lot” or “always”). Items in each of the two subscales were averaged and then the mean of the two subscale scores was computed to indicate the student’s perception of the school as a community. For the purpose of this study, the subscales of the classroom environment measure were averaged as a composite score used to measure classroom environment. Higher scores indicate a greater sense of community. Battistich and Hom (1997) found that the measure was reliable for both males and females, as well as students of various ethnic backgrounds. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  in the current sample was .77.

### **Analysis**

Pearson product moment correlation was used to examine the relation among study variables including the three parenting styles, classroom environment, and child self-efficacy to test the four hypotheses. For the first through third hypotheses, Pearson product moment correlation was used to test whether there was a significant relation between parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and global child self-efficacy. For the fourth hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation was used to test whether there was a significant relation between classroom socio-emotional environment and child self-efficacy. Next, to answer the research question, hierarchical regression was used to test whether parenting style and classroom environment were significantly related to child self-efficacy when controlling for the other. Research Question 1 was tested by first entering parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) as the predictor variable and global child self-efficacy (cognitive competence, physical competence, and peer acceptance composite score) as the criterion variable. In the second step, classroom environment was entered as an additional predictor variable. An  $R^2$  change statistic was used to test whether classroom environment explained a significant amount of variance in child self-efficacy while controlling for parenting style.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Preliminary analyses were run to determine whether any demographic variables were related to global child self-efficacy. Correlations, *t*-tests, and ANOVAs were used to test whether marital status, parent age, parent ethnicity, child ethnicity, child age, household income, and parent education were related to global child self-efficacy. Only household income was significantly related to global child self-efficacy ( $r = .124, p = .012$ ), therefore it will be included in the first step of the regression analyses.

A test of hypotheses 1 through 3 examined the relation of the three parenting styles of authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive with global child self-efficacy. A test of hypotheses 4 examined the relation between supportive classroom environment and global child self-efficacy (see Tables 2, 3, and 4). It was found that none of the three parenting styles examined was significantly correlated with global child self-efficacy. However, classroom climate was found to be significantly positively related to global child self-efficacy ( $r = .164, p = .000$ ).

Three hierarchical regression equations were computed to answer the research question: Does the supportiveness of child classroom environment explain a significant amount of variance in child self-efficacy above that which is explained by parenting style (see Tables 5, 6, and 7)? A two-step regression was used with global child self-efficacy as the dependent variable in each. Because household income was significantly related to global self-efficacy, it was controlled for



in each of the hierarchical regression analyses. In the first regression, authoritative parenting and parent household income were entered in the first step. Classroom climate was entered in the second step. The same process was used for each of the other two parenting styles.

The first hierarchical regression revealed that at stage one, authoritative parenting accounted for 1.7% of variance in global child self-efficacy,  $F(1, 377) = 4.56, p < .05$ . Due to the significant correlation between household income and global child self-efficacy, that relation likely accounts for the significance found in the first step of each of the regressions. Adding the classroom climate variable in stage two explained an additional 2.4% of the variance in global child self-efficacy, and this  $R^2$  change was significant,  $F(1, 377) = 5.71, p < .001$ . The second hierarchical regression found at stage one, authoritarian parenting accounted for 1.9% of variance in global child self-efficacy,  $F(1, 377) = 3.94, p < .05$ . Adding the classroom climate variable in stage two explained an additional 4.2% of the variance in global child self-efficacy and this  $R^2$  change was significant,  $F(1, 377) = 5.73, p < .001$ . The third hierarchical regression found at stage one, permissive parenting accounted for 1.7% of variance in global child self-efficacy,  $F(1, 377) = 3.53, p < .05$ . Adding the classroom climate in stage two explained an additional 3.9% of the variance in global child self-efficacy and this  $R^2$  change was significant,  $F(1, 378) = 5.37, p < .001$ . Therefore, classroom climate explained a significant percent of variation above that which was explained by each of the parenting styles.

### **Post Hoc Analyses**

To better understand the relation between variables, post hoc correlational analyses were run examining the relation between the individual child self-efficacy subscales— physical competence, cognitive competence, peer acceptance, and maternal acceptance—and the three parenting style variables and school climate (see Table 8). It was found that none of the parenting style variables was significantly related to any of child self-efficacy subscales. However, it was found that school climate was significantly positively related to cognitive competence ( $r = .160, p = .000$ ) and peer acceptance ( $r = .142, p = .002$ ).

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relation of classroom environment and parenting style with child self-evaluation. While there is some literature examining the relation between parenting style and adolescent self-efficacy, less research has been done looking at parenting style and early middle childhood self-efficacy. Additionally, the literature on classroom environment and child socio-emotional outcomes lacks generalizability due to the small sample sizes used in the studies found. This study is unique in that it adds to the existing literature by examining the relation between parenting style and global child self-evaluation in early middle childhood. It also adds to the literature by using a fairly large sample size and by examining the unique impact of the classroom environment on child self-evaluation above the influence of parenting style.

In the current study it was found that none of the three parenting styles, authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, was significantly related to child self-evaluation in bivariate analyses. Findings about the relation of parenting style and child self-evaluation were unexpected. Research has not yet looked at the relation between parenting style and child self-evaluation in early middle childhood; however, research has examined the relation with adolescents.

It is unclear why the current study failed to find a similar relation between child self-evaluation in early middle childhood and parenting style. All four of the studies that have

previously examined the relation between parenting style and child self-evaluation found a significant relation but included adolescent samples ranging from ages 12-18 (Gray & Steinberg, 1999; McClun & Merrell, 1998; Milevsky et al., 2007; Panetta et al., 2014). These studies all used adolescent report of perceived parenting while the current study only used parent report of parenting style, which could potentially account for the differences in the findings. Adolescent report of parenting style may be a more accurate representation of parenting style than parent self-report, as parent report may be influenced by social desirability and may also reflect parent intentions but less accurately reflect actual parent behaviors and attitudes. Two studies used the Rosenberg (1965) measure of global self-esteem, which differs from the measure used in this study in that it treats self-esteem as a unidimensional scale rather than having separate subscales to define self-esteem. Rosenberg focuses on a more generalized sense of self worth (i.e., “On the whole, I’m more satisfied with myself.”) while Harter and Pike (1984) aim to understand more specific aspects that create a global sense of self-efficacy (i.e., “This girl/boy is/isn’t very good at numbers.”). The more generalized approach to measuring self-esteem could influence results in a way that shows more of a relation to parenting style rather than the specific aspects being measured by Harter. Additionally, the first grade children participating in this study were at a much different stage in development compared to the adolescents in prior similar studies. First graders are going through many periods of transition and adjustment as they start their formal school career, which includes added pressures to succeed academically and to fit in with peers, which could influence their global self-evaluation (Tramonte et al., 2015). Attention moves more toward comparison with others and peer feedback and away from parent feedback as children enter primary school, which decreases the importance of parenting style as a significant contributor to their overall self-evaluation. Authoritative parenting may be particularly important during adolescence because of adolescents’ increasing need for autonomy and because of the tendency of authoritative parents to respect and support adolescent autonomy while providing scaffolding and guidance.

Classroom environment was found to be significantly related to global child self-evaluation. Additionally, classroom environment explained a significant amount of variance in child self-evaluation above that which was explained by each of the parenting styles. The bivariate findings between classroom environment and global child self-evaluation support the hypothesis. The findings are also supportive of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1977, 1986), which suggests that there are many layers of influence on a child's development, the school environment being one of them. The regression analyses indicated that classroom environment plays a significant role in child self-evaluation beyond that which is explained by parenting style. The findings from the current study support the previous research done on classroom environment and child self-evaluation (Jambunthan, 2012; Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008; Smith & Croom, 2000; Solomon et al. 1996; Stipek et al., 1995). Two studies found a similar relation between classroom environment and child self-evaluation using teacher report of the classroom environment and personal practices providing further confidence in this association (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008; Smith & Croom, 2000). Jambunthan (2012) also used Harter and Pike's (1984) scale of global self-evaluation and had similar findings using a population of preschool students in Head Start classrooms. Several studies used other various measures of child self-perception and found similar results. For example, Maxwell and Chmielewski (2008) used the academic self-competence self-report scale from the Self-Esteem Index (Brown & Alexander, 1991). This scale is similar in nature to the cognitive competence scale used in this study. The Self-Description Questionnaire (Marsh, 1988) was used by Smith and Croom (2000), which used seven different subscales creating two subscale scores for academic and non-academic self-concept. The non-academic self-concept subscales of physical ability, physical appearance, peer relationships, and parent relationships are similar to the subscales of physical competence, peer acceptance, and maternal acceptance used in this study.

Post hoc analyses were run to further examine the relation of parenting style and classroom environment with each of the child self-evaluation variables: physical competence,

cognitive competence, peer acceptance, and maternal acceptance. The outcomes were similar to the initial analyses in that parenting style was not related to any of the subscales while classroom environment was significantly positively related to cognitive competence and peer acceptance. These findings make sense in that classroom environments that are stimulating and emotionally supportive promote cognitive competence and peer acceptance (Jambunthan, 2012). Because developmentally appropriate classrooms are meeting the needs of each individual student, cognitive competence is gained through mastery of an individualized curriculum. Additionally, classrooms with positive socio-emotional environments promote positive peer relationships between students.

### **Implications**

This study adds to the existing literature in that it emphasizes the importance of the focus on the classroom environment above and beyond the influence of parenting style in terms of impact on child self evaluation. The early middle childhood years are a critical time for the development of self (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008). Results of the study show a need for intervention on the classroom level in promoting positive child self-evaluation. These findings add support to prior research indicating that the classroom environment is critical to the development of a strong self-esteem in children. It has been shown that interventions done to change the socio-emotional environment of the classroom can lead to a host of positive outcomes in children, including enhancing child self-evaluation (Solomon et al., 1996; Brock et al., 2007). Administrators and teachers in elementary schools should work to include a socio-emotional focus to their instructional practices, rather than a purely academic focus. This can be done by allowing children the opportunity to be a part of the decision making process for the classroom instruction and rules (Solomon et al., 1996), using a hands-on, experiential approach to learning (Donohue, et al. 2003), and creating opportunities for students to work together collaboratively and learn from their peers, which fosters a positive social climate.

Additionally, family therapists may need to include a focus on other contexts in a child's life outside of the family when working on the development of positive child self-evaluation. Collaborating with the school on issues related to child emotional health could not only increase a child's self-evaluation, but could have other significant positive outcomes related to academic performance and child behaviors. Using a multi-contextual approach allows children to best be served in each of the contexts that are influencing their development. Thus, it would be important for clinicians to assess for classroom environment in the school when a family presents to therapy to develop a thorough assessment of the contextual influences on the problem for the child or family and to provide treatment that benefits all areas of the child's life. Clinicians and teachers can work together to find ways to enhance the classroom and family environments to be most conducive to fostering self-efficacy in the child. School counselors could be an additional resource to use in this collaboration as a front-line identifier of students in need. The school counselors could help facilitate classroom environment enhancements and to also serve as an additional professional support to the teacher as they work to accommodate each student's socio-emotional needs. Because of the potential high demand for teachers and school counselors to execute this additional task, it could be beneficial to have a licensed therapist on staff at the school who is able to provide traditional child and family therapy, while also being able to establish and maintain positive working relationships with all teachers in the school.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

While there are many strengths of this study, one limitation is the sample demographics. While the sample had a fairly good American Indian representation, other minority groups were underrepresented in the same. Therefore, there is uncertainty in regards to how these results would generalize to other diverse populations. Similarly, because of the lack of diversity in the classroom, it is unclear how the classroom environment would impact the self-evaluations of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Another limitation of this study is that it only used student report of perceived classroom environment. While the perception of the environment is an

important perspective, it is unclear what type of classroom practices are actually being used by the teacher and if the perception is the same across students in the classroom. Similarly, only using parents' report of their parenting style could lead to reporter bias or social desirability. Additionally, because of the small number of father responses to the parent survey, there is less known from this study about their specific impact on child self-evaluation. A final limitation of this study is the cross sectional design, which impacts the ability to determine directionality of the effects. While one explanation could be that the classroom environment promotes positive peer relations and cognitive competence, another explanation could be that because of the positive relationships with peers and the feelings of cognitive mastery, the classroom environment may be perceived by children in a more positive light.

Future research should look at diversifying the sample population in order to validate the findings of this study on the impact of the classroom environment on child self-evaluation. Future researchers should also include an observational measure of the classroom environment to corroborate the student reports of the classroom environment. A longitudinal study would be important to determine the direction effects between classroom environment and child self-evaluation. Researchers should consider looking specifically at the relationship between fathers and their children to examine if fathers have a more prominent impact on child self-evaluation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

**Table 1**

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables*

Variable	Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentages	
	Mothers ( <i>n</i> )	Fathers ( <i>n</i> )
Child age in years		<i>M</i> 6.94, SD .397 (478)
Parent age in years	<i>M</i> 34.14, SD 7.05 (347)	<i>M</i> 36.02, SD 7.94 (19)
Income per month	(372)	(39)
\$0-999	24.5	10.2
\$1,000-1,999	21.5	12.8
\$2,000-2,999	18.9	18.0
\$3,000-3,999	13.7	10.3
\$4,000 plus	21.5	48.7
Parent Ethnicity	(442)	(47)

Caucasian	67.2	72.3
Native American	12.4	4.3
All else	20.4	23.4
Marital status		
Married, first time		58.0
Remarried		21.0
Single, Divorced		13.2
Single, Never married		5.0
Single, Separated		2.4
Parent Education	(382)	(41)
Some high school	6.5	4.8
High school graduate	14.1	4.9
Some college	32.2	24.4
College graduate	47.1	65.8

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Appendix B

**Table 2**

Table 2

*Bi-variate Correlations Between Variables (n= 477-488)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Authoritative Parenting Style	--				
2. Authoritarian Parenting Style	-.398*	--			
3. Permissive Parenting Style	-.114*	.360**	--		
4. Classroom Climate	.114*	-.020	.026	--	
5. Global Self-Efficacy	-.010	.053	.016	.164**	--

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

Appendix C

**Table 3**

Table 3

*Bivariate Correlations Testing Hypothesized Relations*

	Global Child Self-Efficacy
Authoritative Parenting Style	-.010
Authoritarian Parenting Style	.053
Permissive Parenting Style	.016
Classroom Climate	.164**

\*\* $p < .01$

Appendix D

**Table 4**

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of Variables*

	<i>N</i>	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Authoritative Parenting Style	489	3.20	1.80	5.00	4.10	.46
Authoritarian Parenting Style	487	2.75	1.08	3.83	1.78	.40
Permissive Parenting Style	489	3.40	1.00	4.40	2.19	.62
Classroom Climate	479	1.73	1.27	3.00	2.43	.38
Global Child Self-Efficacy	486	2.22	1.78	4.00	3.22	.48

Appendix E

**Table 5**

Table 5

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Variables for Authoritarian Parenting Style*

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$ Change	$p$
Step 1				.019	.019	3.943	.020
Authoritarian	.058	1.167	.244				
Parent Income	.129	2.591	.010				
Step 2				.042	.022	9.148	.003
Authoritarian	.018	1.183	.238				
Parent Income	.072	2.320	.021				
Classroom Climate	.191	3.025	.003				

Appendix F

**Table 6**

Table 6

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Variables for Permissive Parenting Style*

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$ Change	$p$
Step 1				.017	.017	3.529	.030
Permissive	.037	.739	.460				
Parent Income	.130	2.612	.009				
Step 2				.039	.022	8.916	.003
Permissive	.030	.599	.550				
Parent Income	.116	2.329	.020				
Classroom Climate	.148	2.986	.003				

Appendix G

**Table 7**

Table 7

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Variables for Authoritative Parenting Style*

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$ Change	$p$
Step 1				.017	.017	3.455	.033
Authoritative	-.032	-.647	.518				
Parent Income	.124	2.487	.013				
Step 2				.041	.024	10.051	.002
Authoritative	-.058	-1.151	.250				
Parent Income	.107	2.156	.032				
Classroom Climate	.159	3.170	.002				



Appendix H

**Table 8**

Table 8

*Post Hoc Bivariate Correlations (n=477-488)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Authoritative	--							
2. Authoritarian	-.398*	--						
3. Permissive	-.114*	.360**	--					
4. School Climate	.114*	-.020	.026	--				
5. Cognitive Competence	-.007	.033	-.011	.160**	--			
6. Peer Acceptance	.010	.019	.014	.142**	.422**	--		
7. Physical Competence	-.033	.084	.037	.076	.458**	.397**	--	
8. Maternal Acceptance	.047	-.003	.057	.064	.410**	.597**	.400**	--

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$  (two tailed)

## Appendix I

### Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Friday, November 06, 2015  
IRB Application No HE1563  
Proposal Title: The relation between parenting style, classroom environment, and child self-evaluation

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

**Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 11/5/2018**

Principal

Investigator(s):

Stephanie Drymon

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The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.


The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Scott Hall (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Hugh Crethar, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

## VITA

Stephanie Nicole Drymon

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE RELATION OF CHILD SELF-EVALUATION WITH PARENTING  
STYLE AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

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