

A study on the intervention of positive discipline on parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being among Chinese parents

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Submitted: 13.06.2025 **Accepted:** 26.11.2025

Available online: 12.02.2026

Abstract

Background: In contemporary China, parenting is characterized by high stress and authoritarian practices, leading to negative impacts on self-efficacy and well-being. Positive Discipline provides an alternative to improve family dynamics that is more in harmony with Chinese culture. The positive discipline method is appropriate for the Chinese culture owing to its focus on self-discipline and high academic achievement. The idea of positive discipline in recent years has emerged as a new effective positive parenting approach supporting both kind and firm parenting styles, contributing positively to child development.

Aim: This study examines the impact of Positive Discipline on self-efficacy and subjective wellness of Chinese parents, focusing on culturally responsive psychological interventions.

Methodology: A six-week quasi-experimental intervention with 62 parents from Fujian Province, China, utilised the validated Subjective Well-being Scale and the brief-parental-self-efficacy-scale-interactive. Data was analysed quantitatively through SPSS pre- and post-intervention by analysing the two variables self-efficacy and well-being.

Results: Parents reported improved parenting self-efficacy, increased subjective well-being, therefore, a reduced stress post-intervention. There was a strong correlation showing the efficacy of the intervention in ensuring parental well-being in promoting a sense of parenting efficacy and subjective well-being.

Conclusion: Positive Discipline nurtures self-efficacy in parenting and psychological well-being among Chinese parents. This would empower the parents to adopt a modern parenting style in Chinese society and adapt to the current

G. Wu et al. / *Ricerche di Psicologia*, 2025, Vol. 48
ISSNe 1972-5620, Doi: 10.3280/rip2025oa21742

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parenting pressure. Incorporating PD into family support services might reduce parenting stress and improve emotional health.

Keywords: Positive Discipline; Parenting Self-Efficacy; Chinese Parents; Subjective Well-being

1. Introduction

Parenting has evolved over the years, and today, it remains a process that is continuously changing. It is important to note that parenting affects both the child's development and the family's overall well-being. In recent years, the idea of positive discipline (PD) as a new effective positive parenting approach which supports both kind and firm parenting style has been accepted (Straus & Stewart, 1999; Durrant, 2016). This kind of approach is beneficial for the development of a child's self-esteem (supportive) as well as his or her motivation to achieve desired outcomes (non-punitive approach). This PD method is more appropriate for the Chinese culture as it predominantly focuses on enforcing self-discipline and high academic achievement (Chao, 1994). However, there is a lack of information on how positive discipline is understood to affect the self-efficacy and subjective well-being of Chinese parents.

Parenting efficacy demonstrates the capacity of the mother or father to determine how well a child develops and how a certain child behaves (Bandura et al., 1999). Higher self-efficacy is linked to positive attendance toward children, effective parenting skills, and lowered parental tension (Jones & Prinz, 2005). Conversely, low self-efficacy brings along greater parental anxiety paired with frustration and negative responses towards the children (Coleman and Karraker, 1998). Considering the focus on Confucian values of discipline and authority in Chinese parenting, positive discipline can be seen as an avenue for better parent-child relationships, but challenges to parental confidence may also be present (Xu et al., 2009). This study aims to fill these gaps by measuring the effect of a positive discipline intervention on parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being among Chinese parents. Moreover, studies suggest that modern Chinese parenting is also influenced by intense and fast-changing challenges driven by technological progress, high academic pressures, and changes in family structures (Lan et al., 2019). Digital technology has become omnipresent, offering opportunities for learning as well as posing significant risks. The transformation has also revolutionized the world of parenting, for instance, parents now have the additional responsibility of overseeing digital activity alongside encouraging

digital literacy competencies and emotional resiliency among children (Mascheroni et al., 2018; Rice & Ortiz, 2021). Many Chinese mothers lack effective parenting methods, resulting in poor self-efficacy and burnout. Studies emphasize escalating issues of children's increased exposure to objectionable content, bullying, and social isolation attributed to excessive screen use (Odgers et al., 2020). Therefore, the parents are required to be adequately prepared.

Additionally, academic stress has been growing stronger in China's highly competitive educational system. The academic stress is enhanced by a deeply ingrained social perception that scholastic achievement is directly related to future wealth (Liu et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2022). It forces many parents to spend heavily on extracurricular coaching and strict school routines, making a significant contribution to parental anxiety. Additionally, in the context of government efforts like the "Double Reduction" policy aimed at relieving such pressures, long-standing cultural norms result in a never-ending cycle of stress and increased anxiety among families (Chen et al., 2022). These existing evidences show that pressure is responsible for psychological issues in children such as depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Thus, parental strain is enhanced through pressure, which further distorts family dynamics.

Moreover, changing family forms aggravate these modern parenting issues. Based on the seventh national population census, the average family size in China fell dramatically, from 3.10 persons in 2010 to 2.62 persons in 2020 (anbound.com, n.d). Additionally, accelerated urbanisation and economic development in China have altered the traditional multi-generational families into smaller nuclear family's demographic transition lowers intergenerational support and communal caregiving. This demographic transition lowers intergenerational support and communal caregiving. On the other hand, the reduced presence of extended family caregiving systems leaves parents with excessive loads (Dong & Rao, 2023; Zhu & Zhou, 2022). Such changes increase the burden on parents to handle familial tasks and childcare on their own, also affecting their parenting self-efficacy and overall well-being.

Within this context, embracing effective parenting approaches becomes important. Positive Discipline (PD) offers a useful alternative to authoritarian or permissive parenting. PD is based on Adlerian theory, stressing respect, compassion, positive communication, and democratic problem-solving (Durrant, 2016). It is a non-punitive and non-indulgent strategy that can support children's healthy living practices and increase mothers' parenting self-efficacy. Thereby, this approach specifically targets the special requirements being experienced by parents in China today.

Evidence confirms that Positive Discipline-trained parents express lower stress, increased parenting efficacy, and increased subjective well-being (Apaydin, 2022; Estiningsih et al., 2022). Subsequently, effective parenting approaches, marked by responsiveness, warmth, and equitable discipline, are essential not only for promoting children's healthy emotional and social growth.

Parenting in modern Chinese society is heavily founded by traditional values, cultural expectations, and fast socio-economic transitions. The heritage of policy experiences like the one-child policy, coupled with high academic pressures and urbanisation, imposes distinct stressors on parents, constructing parenting roles and practices (Feng, 2021). These elements are responsible for heightened parental stress and the demand for ethnically appropriate interventions. Here, PD can emphasize respectful yet firm parenting which can counter these situational challenges by fostering peaceful parent-child relationships in this unique cultural context.

PD is also capable of developing efficient parenting approaches. PD enhances more harmonious family relations, lowers conflict levels between parents and children, and imparts basic life skills like emotional regulation, resilience, and cooperative problem-solving (Chen et al., 2022). Parents can best handle challenges, ensuring increased psychological and emotional well-being across generations. Such consequences are particularly relevant considering China's rapidly evolving socio-cultural landscape and the multi-dimensional demands of modern families. Moreover, in the Chinese context, parenting styles are shaped by Confucian ethical values requiring obedience and tight discipline (Du, 2022). These cultural norms encourage obedience and discipline as foundational to child-rearing, often resulting in authoritarian parenting styles. On the other hand, well-being is an area of increasing concern in the context of parenting. It is a multidimensional concept that includes life satisfaction, positive affect, and low levels of distress (Diener, 1984). Research shows that effective parenting, characterized by warmth and consistency, is positively associated with parental well-being (Kawamoto et al., 2016). Nonetheless, there is little evidence to suggest that use of positive discipline markedly improves SWB for parents in China, who, as a rule, suffer from high child-rearing pressure (Satrio et al., 2023). Subsequently, PD offers a balanced alternative by fostering respect and cooperation while maintaining parental authority, requiring careful adaptation to align with Confucian expectations. Thereby, there is a need to understand the intervention of PD in the Chinese cultural context. Thus, the study aims to examine the impact of PD on parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being among Chinese parents.

To further study the impact substantially, the study is guided by the following objective

RO: To examine the effect of Positive Discipline on subjective well-being and self-efficacy among Chinese parents.

This study would be significant in filling gaps in knowledge by presenting empirical evidence of Positive Discipline's impact on promoting parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being in Chinese parents. It would enrich current literature by providing Positive Discipline in the specific socio-cultural Chinese setting, making an important contribution to cross-cultural parenting research. Most importantly, it would aid in designing culturally sensitive parenting training programs, which may have the added effect of increasing parental confidence. Subsequently, it would decrease stress and strengthen family relationships. Thus, this study would promote a paradigm shift towards healthier, more positive, democratic parenting in China

2. Literature Review

2.1. Psychological and Emotional Well-being of Parents using Positive Discipline

Positive discipline (PD) is focused on promoting children's healthy development, but also developing parents' emotional and psychological well-being. In contrast to punitive strategies, PD employs discipline from the standpoints of reverence, solving issues, and controlling emotions. This in turn, can positively impact parents' stress coping, emotional well-being, and overall subjective well-being (Lanjekar et al., 2022). Increased emotion regulation along with diminished parental strain is one of the benefits of PD for the parents and caretakers. Parents who practice PD report lesser cases of burnout or parental frustration because they feel in control of their discipline compared to those who practice other (Greene et al., 2015). PD lowers the guilt or anger parents may harbor due to ineffective discipline and encourages constructive emotional interactions (Gershoff et al., 2018). The other important dimension is parents' built positive feelings towards their children which improves parental well-being.

Evidence indicates that when parents apply PD, they are positively attached with their children which decreases the level of anxiety and emotional exhaustion associated with parenting (Durrant, 2013). Non-punitive, respectful discipline puts parents in a positive reinforcement cycle where they feel competent and fulfilled in their parenting (Siegel et al., 2014). Moreover, it has been noted that PD interventions are associated with

long-term mental health benefits with parents showing higher self-efficacy, lower stress, and greater life satisfaction (Shin et al., 2021). PD interventions protect parents from potential mental health difficulties by giving them effective strategies to manage discipline problems, making it an effective approach for improving parental mental health.

2.2. Parenting Stress and Self-Efficacy

Parenting styles may have a direct impact on the self-efficacy of parents. Parenting stress has negative impacts on parental emotional well-being, evoking anxiety, depression, and burnout, resulting in less responsive and more punitive parenting styles (Neece et al., 2012). Multiple factors moderate parenting stress, such as socioeconomic status (SES), marital status, and number of children (Hoff & Laursen, 2019; Spinelli et al., 2021; Teng et al., 2018). Thereby, children who are exposed to high parental stress levels exhibit greater rates of emotional issues, poor academic performance, and compromised social competence. Similarly, lower SES families are under greater stress owing to fewer resources and access to social support services. Such stress is further exacerbated by factors such as the number of children also affects stress, with multiple-child families (Craig & Churchill, 2018). Thus, parents face stress due to various factors in their environment.

Furthermore, existing research also indicates strong positive associations between increased PSE and supportive, responsive, and stable parenting patterns (Glatz & Buchanan, 2015). Low self-efficacy is associated with inconsistency, reduced parent-child involvement, and greater behavioral and emotional difficulty in children (Alaçam, 2015; Jiang et al., 2023). Parents with higher self-efficacy are more involved in positive interactions, promoting enhanced social-emotional development, greater self-esteem, and improved academic performance in children. Within this context, Positive Discipline interventions are particularly effective in strengthening parents' self-efficacy through skill-building for everyday practices.

2.3. Adaptation of PD in the Chinese Cultural Context

Recent research points to the effective implementation of Positive Discipline (PD) in Chinese cultural settings. Liu et al. (2024) discovered that PD had a profound impact on Chinese mothers' parenting self-efficacy, leading to long-term positive behavioural change. The adaptations involved the integration of PD philosophy with Chinese respect for authority and academic success, indicating PD's cultural adaptability and efficacy in urban Chinese families. It highlighted emotional warmth along with structure, in

keeping with collectivist values and filial obligations. Thereby, the family entail adjustments and adaptation of PD techniques into collectivist ideals, academic priorities, and cultural norms. On the contrary, Fatima et al. (2022) suggested that traditional discipline methods negatively affected rural Chinese early development, promoting PD-based practices that focus on non-aversive, respectful parenting as acceptable cultural alternatives that promote child cognitive and emotional outcomes in Chinese families. However, these studies show the potential of PD in cultural responsiveness and effectiveness within Chinese culture.

2.4. Gaps in Existing Research

Despite the potential of PD, there are significant gap in research within the Chinese context. Firstly, current research is largely based on short-term follow-up, which constrains knowledge about long-term effectiveness (Liu et al., 2024). Moreover, despite the evidence of PD from global studies, there are limited studies in the Chinese context. Therefore, further rigorous, longitudinal, culturally contextualized research is important to fully assess long-term implications and generalizability of PD interventions for parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being in Chinese parenting environments.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Adlerian Psychology along with Baumrind's Parenting Style Typology and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory that explain the relationship between positive discipline, parenting self-efficacy, and subjective well-being (SWB) of Chinese parents. Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework.

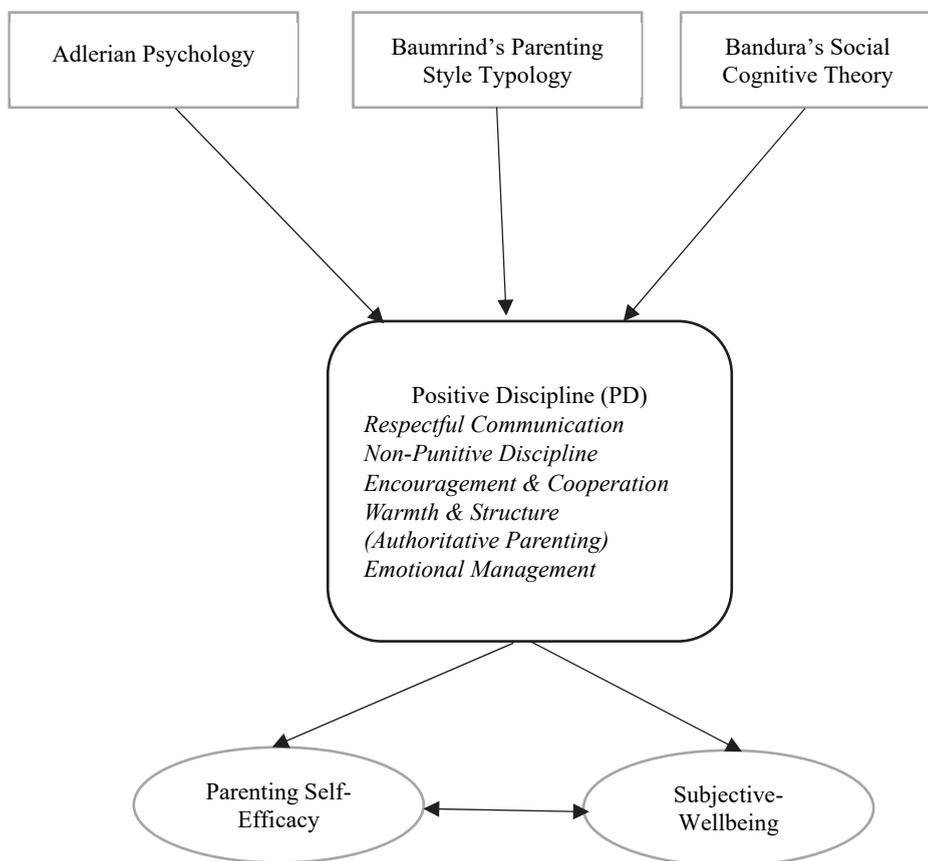


Figure 1 - Theoretical Framework (self)

Together this emphasizes on the aspect of positive and authoritative parenting along with parental self-efficacy and its effects on child and family functioning. Social interest is defined as the ability to understand and concern oneself with other individuals. According to Dr. Alfred Adler (1930), an individual's actions aim to achieve a certain goal. From this perspective, discipline must be respectful and cooperative at the same time not punishing yet strict (Tekyi-Arhin, 2024). Adlerian principles stress discipline through use of encouragement rather than punishment for children's misbehaviour, which is considered to be a form of seeking belongingness and recognition in the family (Dreikurs, 1953). Positive discipline is integrative within Adlerian psychology because it advocates respectful communication with children and logical discipline instead of punitive discipline. Unlike authoritarian or domineering discipline, which

bases itself on excessive control or permissive parenting that lacks control, positive discipline allows for a balance or blend of punishment and care resulting in the child learning self-discipline, social responsibility, and problem-solving (Nelsen, 2006). In the context of Chinese culture, where authoritarian parenting has been rampant, positive discipline depicts a more balanced approach that is structured yet emotionally secure and respectful.

Diana Baumrind's parenting typology (Baumrind, 1967) grouped parenting practices into four types: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful, each of which influence the development of children in different ways. Authoritative parenting, which encompasses high affection and high control, is associated with children's self-sufficiency, healthy emotions, and achievement in school. On the other hand, authoritarian parenting, marked by excessive control and lack of empathy, tends to result in excessive compliance, greater stress, and lower emotional well-being (Estlein, 2016). Permissive parenting is likely to yield deficient self-control among children, whereas neglectful parenting has been shown to be associated with negative child outcomes. Baumrind's model is helpful to hypothesize the impact of different styles on parenting and child outcomes. Positive discipline is clearly associated with authoritative parenting because it sets rules and expectations on the children while offering compassion and respect. This is particularly true in China where authoritarian parenting is giving way to more adaptive, authoritative parenting. The application of PD programs is expected to assist parents in shifting to more authoritative styles, thus increasing both self-efficacy in parenting and subjective well-being.

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986, 2001) argues that human behaviour is the result of the interplay of personal, behavioural, and environmental influences. In regard to parenting, parenting self-efficacy (PSE) – the perception of one's capabilities to effectively use the required skills to raise a child – is one of the most important aspects of self-determined factors of parenting behaviour (Jones & Prinz, 2005). Bandura stated that self-efficacy was dependent on four key sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and physiological states.

In order to strengthen self-efficacy, parents need to successfully cope with challenges and overcome obstacles. Positive discipline provides parents with competent, practical techniques that further enhance their confidence. Seeing other parents using PD successfully helps reinforce the attitude that they can also use those methods. Support from colleagues, parenting tutors, or other specialists can guarantee parents' adherence to PD. Furthermore, non-punitive discipline reduces parenting stress, which in turn enhances self-regulation and emotional well-being. Coleman & Karraker (1998) noted that authoritative PSE is associated with parenting practices which foster children's emotional

well-being, academic achievement, and holistic development. The specific context of cultural Chinese parenting with its high societal pressure and academic expectation means that PD intervention to strengthen PSE allows parents to use effective, emotionally supportive parenting. Positive discipline, along with Adlerian psychology, Baumrind's parenting typology, and Bandura's social cognitive theory offers great insight within the scope of positive discipline interventions aimed at improving parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being of Chinese parents.

The potential of PD interventions is embedded in this framework as shown in the figure. They seek to effect change in parenting by shifting from punitive discipline to firm but respectful discipline, from authoritarianism to authoritative parenting, which builds parental self-efficacy and, consequently, better parenting and parent well-being. Using these theories, the study seeks to offer details information about how the Chinese culture can positively integrate discipline to achieve more favourable psychological results for parents and children.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study followed an experimental research design to assess the effectiveness of PD. An intervention program for parents was designed for six weeks on PD based on the outlines by Nelsen and Lott (2017). Subsequently, a survey was conducted to assess the impact on the parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being in Chinese parents. The research design was ideal for this study as the measurement of intervention effects in real-world contexts, particularly where random assignment is not feasible or ethical (Cook et al., 1979). On the other hand, a cross-sectional design was not appropriate for this study since it gave an insight into data at one point in time after the interventions was undertaken. Therefore, a pre-test and post-test was conducted to measure the well-being of the parents. Subsequently, the parental efficacy was measured after the intervention. Thus, the design ensured capturing the change in parenting self-efficacy and subjective well-being after the intervention.

3.2. Participants

This study included parents of 6-12-year-old children from Fujian

Province. The number of participants included was 68 based on the number of parents who agreed to join the program. Additionally, Fujian province was selected as it reflects varied socioeconomic statuses and family compositions common in modern Chinese society (Ma et al., 2023). It allowed for greater generalizability and ecological validity. Additionally, the specific age group of 6-12 years was selected as middle childhood is a developmentally pivotal period during which parenting practices heavily influence children's emotional, social, and academic abilities (Glowiak & Mayfield, 2016). These ensured that the study was focused.

The participants were recruited through purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria included:

- parents between 25-45 years of age (no gender specification was made).
- Having at least one child in the specified age range (6-12 years old). The number of children per family was not controlled in the analyses due to the sample size limitation.
- Participation in the six-week intervention program.

On the other hand, exclusion criteria included:

- parents with diagnosed psychiatric disorders
- serious chronic diseases
- participating in other parental training programs
- Parents who did not complete the program.

Ethical issues were followed during the study by discussing to ensure research integrity and participants' well-being. Informed written consent was obtained with clear specification of the research purposes, methods, voluntary participation, confidentiality guarantee, and right to withdraw without loss. Additionally, confidentiality was ensured through anonymization of data using codes for the participants, safe storage, and exclusive access.

3.3. Intervention Design

Duration: Six weeks

The intervention design is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - 6 Week Positive Discipline Parenting Class Outline

Week	Topic	Objectives	Weekly Practice
1	Introduction	<p>Establish rapport, trust, and collaboration.</p> <p>Introduce participants to the fundamental principles of Positive Discipline.</p> <p>Encourage participants' reflections on their current parenting styles.</p>	<p>Introducing the group is an icebreaker.</p> <p>Mini-lecture: Positive discipline theory and parenting styles (Baumrind's framework).</p> <p>Interactive exercise: Talking about parenting difficulties in a group setting.</p> <p>Assignment: Writing reflectively in a journal about one's own parenting struggles.</p> <p>Choose a PD Tool Card for inspiration.</p>
2	Building Mutual Respect	<p>Recognize the value of respect for one another in parent-child relationships.</p> <p>Determine particular tactics to serve as an example of polite conversation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kind and Firm • 4 R's of Punishment • Five Criteria & PD NO NOs • Understanding the Brain • Positive Time Out
3	Emotional Management	<p>Give parents the tools they need to properly control their own emotions.</p> <p>Teach kids how to recognize and effectively express their feelings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief Behind the Behavior • Not your Job to Make your Children Happy • Four R's of Recovery from Mistakes • Mistaken Goal Chart Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting & the 3 Bs • PHPPSS

4	Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement	<p>Explain the distinction between encouragement and praise.</p> <p>Create plans to increase kids' intrinsic motivation and sense of self.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize how you may encourage misconduct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold family gatherings. • Work with your child to make a routine chart.
5	Problem-Solving and Collaborative Decision Making	<p>Present cooperative methods for resolving parenting issues.</p> <p>Boost parents' self-assurance in cooperative dispute settlement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to correction, don't forget to establish a connection. • With your child, make a wheel of choice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an example for your children. • Wheel of Choice; • Encouragement vs. Praise; • Thermometer Demo; • Don't Talk Back
6	Effective Limit-Setting and Discipline Strategies	<p>Create techniques for setting limits that are polite but forceful.</p> <p>Positive discipline techniques should be used in place of punitive ones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take note of your role in disputes. Make use of affirmations that empower • See practice errors as teaching moments. • Enabling versus Empowering

3.4. Measurement Instruments

This study used two well-established scales: Subjective Well-being Scale and brief-parental-self-efficacy-scale-interactive.

- Brief parental self-efficacy scale (BPSES): It is a 10-item questionnaire assessing parents' self-efficacy in addressing their children's behavior (corc.uk.net, n.d). Based on its short length and psychometric properties, the scale was ideally placed for multiple measures in intervention research, demonstrating changes in parental confidence and skill following intervention with accuracy. The BPSES proved to have good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.81$) and strong construct validity, predicting both parenting behaviors and child outcomes successfully.
- Subjective Well-being Scale: The Subjective Well-Being (SWB) Scale is a psychological instrument used to capture a person's emotional well-being which incorporates an individual's satisfaction with life, positive

emotions, and negativity in emotion (i.e. low negative emotions). SWB is multidimensional framework that incorporates both thinking and feeling aspects of well-being. It contains key elements such as satisfaction with life and the presence of positive affect (joy, contentment), and negative emotions like anxiety or sadness (Diener, 1984). In psychological research, the scale is popular in evaluating mental and emotional health, as well as examining correlates of well-being like family relations, social support, and personal perceptions of success and happiness.

For the purposes of this study, the SWB scale was employed to analyze the emotional and psychological effects of the Positive Discipline (PD intervention) on Chinese parents. The scale captures how parents evaluate their well-being over the course of the intervention, including their emotional resilience, stress levels, and overall life satisfaction during the intervention. The SWB scale is appropriate for this research because it encompasses the cognitive component of well-being (the evaluation of life by the parents) and the emotional component (day-to-day feelings), thus capturing the psychological returns of PD in parenting. The goal of this research was to explore how modifications in parenting approaches, particularly the adoption of positive discipline, might enhance psychological well-being and alleviate emotional strain for the parents. Thus, the SWB scale was designed to assess the extent to which PD interventions affect parental mental health relative to life satisfaction and emotional wellness.

3.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection consisted of intensive measurements to ensure intervention efficacy could be measured reliably. After the 6-week Positive Discipline training intervention, participants received post-intervention measurements using the Subjective Well-being Scale and brief-parental-self-efficacy-scale-interactiveassessment instruments. This uniform measure strategy enabled valid comparisons and limited measurement bias (Bonate, 2000). Subsequently, reliability test, correlation and regression was undertaken to understand whether the influence of PD made any impact. Data analyses were performed with SPSS version 26 to guarantee methodological transparency and replicability.

4. Results

After exclusion of dropouts and invalid responses, finally 62 records or participants have been included for the data analysis. Within the participants

53.23% are Female, that indicates a marginally higher number of female. The age of 46.77% participants are within 36-40 years, and 38.71% participants are 31 to 35 years old. It indicates that the participants are mostly 31 to 40 years old. The mean age of the children of the participants is 9.39 years which ranged from 6 to 12 years.

Table 4.1 - Demographic Background of Participants

		Count	N %
Gender	Male	29	46.77%
	Female	33	53.23%
Age	25-30 years	2	3.23%
	31-35 years	24	38.71%
	36-40 years	29	46.77%
	41-45 years	7	11.29%

Figure 4.1 - Histogram of Age of the Child of the Participants

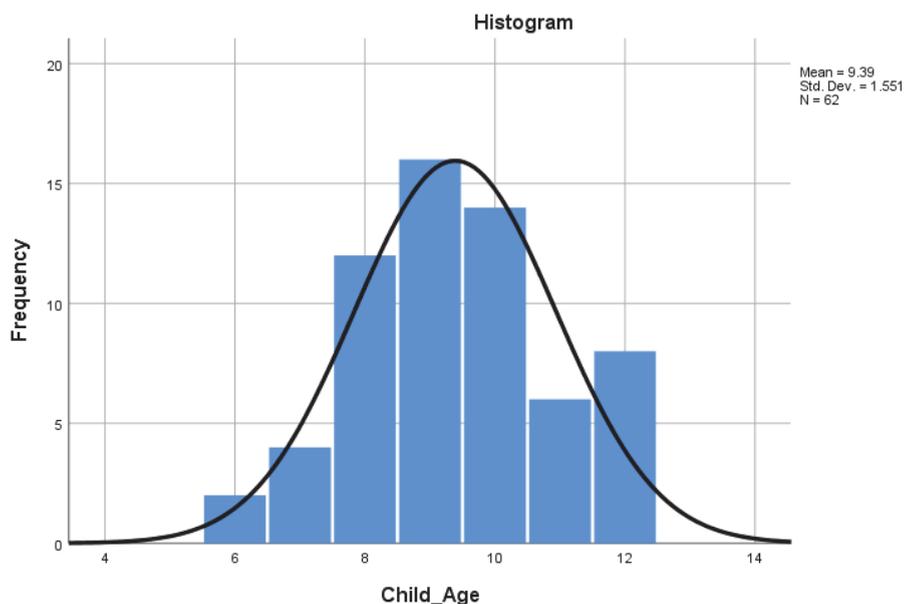


Table 4.2 - Sampling Adequacy Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.862
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1106.355
	Sig.	0.000

According to the KMO coefficient that is 0.862, it is higher than the threshold of 0.6, which depicts an adequate number of sample size to formulate the scales for BPSES and SWB. The Bartlett's Test showed that the dataset is significantly valid ($p < 0.05$) to develop a model. For reliability and validity test the exploratory factor analysis has been done with Varimax Rotation and Principle Component Extraction considering the questionnaire of pre-test, since in post-test same questionnaire has been used. The Table 4.3, showed that the validity both BPSES scale ($AVE = 0.855 > 0.5$) and SWB scale ($AVE = 0.711 > 0.5$) is significantly valid. The reliability of both of these scales are very high as per their composite reliability values. The high factor loadings indicated that each chosen items are strongly contributed to develop the intended scale.

Table 4.3 - Factor Analysis, Validity and Reliability Test

	Factor Loadings			
	BPSES	SWBS	AVE	CR
BPSES1-PRE		0.941	0.855	0.967
BPSES2-PRE		0.895		
BPSES3-PRE		0.918		
BPSES4-PRE		0.925		
BPSES5-PRE		0.944		
SWBS1-PRE	0.981		0.711	0.967
SWBS2-PRE	0.889			
SWBS3-PRE	0.863			
SWBS4-PRE	0.817			
SWBS5-PRE	0.854			
SWBS6-PRE	0.888			
SWBS7-PRE	0.753			
SWBS8-PRE	0.772			
SWBS9-PRE	0.769			
SWBS10-PRE	0.842			
SWBS11-PRE	0.784			
SWBS12-PRE	0.881			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

As per Table 4.4, it can be seen that BPSES and SWB at pre-test are not significantly correlated, whereas at post-test, there is a significant positive correlation between PSE and SWB ($r = 0.283$). It shows that after the intervention, the Parent Self-Efficacy and Subjective Well-Being became associated with each other. Which indicates that the intervention has a significant influence on creating a positive association between these two factors.

Table 4.4 - Correlation between Measures

		Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	BPSES-PRE & SWBS-PRE	0.091	0.484
Pair 2	BPSES-POST & SWBS-POST	0.283	0.026
Pair 3	BPSES-PRE & BPSES-POST	0.684	0.000
Pair 4	SWBS-PRE & SWBS-POST	0.804	0.000

As per the descriptive results at Table 4.5, the PSE at pre-test (3.029 ± 1.113) is notably lower than BPSE post-test (3.413 ± 1.394) and the SWB is notably higher in post-test (4.003 ± 1.016) than pre-test (3.167 ± 0.978).

Table 4.5 - Descriptive Statistics of Measures

	Mean	SD	Min	Q1(25%)	Median	Q3(75%)	Max
BPSES-Pre	3.029	1.113	1	2.2	3.05	4	5
BPSES-Post	3.413	1.394	1	1.95	3.5	4.8	5
SWBS-Pre	3.167	0.978	1.08	2.646	3.125	3.917	4.83
SWBS-Post	4.003	1.016	1.25	3.250	4.092	4.917	5

The results of the paired sample T-test in Table 4.6 showed that both PSE ($t = -2.936$, $p < 0.05$) and SWB ($t = -10.53$, $p < 0.05$) have significantly increased from pre-test to post-test. However, the increment in Subjective Well-being is significantly higher than the increment in Parental Self-Efficacy due to the intervention. It has been found that in the pre-test stage there is no significant difference in Subjective Well-being and Parental Self-Efficacy, whereas in the post-test there is a significant difference ($t = -3.151$, $p < 0.05$) where Subjective Well-being Is significantly higher than Parental Self-Efficacy.

Therefore, the intervention caused significant increment in both Parental Self-Efficacy and Subjective Well-being, whereas the intervention more strongly increased Subjective Well-being than Parental Self-Efficacy. Besides, the intervention also developed an association between Parental Self-Efficacy and Subjective Well-being.

Table 4.6 - Paired Sample T-test of Measures

		Mean	SD	SE	95%CI	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
					[-		
Pair 1	BPSEST1 - SWBST1	-0.138	1.414	0.18	0.497,0. 221]	-0.766	0.446
Pair 2	BPSEST2 - SWBST2	-0.590	1.474	0.18	[-0.964,- 0.215]	-3.151	0.003
Pair 3	BPSEST1 - BPSEST2	-0.384	1.030	0.13	[-0.645,- 0.122]	-2.936	0.005
Pair 4	SWBST1 - SWBST2	-0.836	0.625	0.07	[-0.995,- 0.677]	-10.53	0.000

Note: Obs = 62; Degree of Freedom for each pair = 61

5. Discussion

5.1. Discussion on Efficacy of PD and Subjective Well-being

The current research sought to assess the efficacy of Positive Discipline (PD) in improving parenting self-efficacy and well-being among Chinese parents. The results showed that the intervention facilitated healthier parent-child relationships and better parental well-being. Post-intervention scores indicated that participants reported moderate to low levels of stress, implying that PD enabled parents to better regulate their emotional reactions and everyday parenting responsibilities. This is consistent with the core objective of PD: to promote respectful and organized family relationships without relying on punitive control (Nelsen & Lott, 2017). This is highlighted by the statistically significant negative correlation between stress and parenting self-efficacy, showing the increased parenting ability confidence promoted by decreased emotional load. As with many parents, PD's respectful and ordered approach based on ingrained traditions of severe discipline and study emphasis was also added advantage. The results highlighted the intricate interaction of Chinese cultural influences and PD's acceptance and success.

The evaluation of subjective well-being (SWB) shows substantial enhancement in parental emotional well-being after the implementation of the Positive Discipline (PD) intervention. Participating parents appeared to experience an increase in overall well-being, indicating that their emotional distress and life satisfaction were positively affected after PD program participation. This change is indicative of the broader psychosocial effects of PD which non-punitive discipline, emotion regulation, and respectful language encourage, regarding parent-child relationships and the emotional burden on parents. Increasing SWB illustrates that the PD approach appears

to create a healthier emotional state among parents by alleviating parenting strain and enhancing parenting self-efficacy. This data reinforces the claim that effective strategies such as PD not only improve parenting skills but significantly enhance parental psychological well-being. Also, the positive relationship of SWB with parenting self-efficacy shows that greater confidence a parent has in facing parenting tasks is related to better emotional wellbeing. On the other hand, the negative relationship with parenting stress underlines the need to alleviate stress for improving psychological health – well-being paradox. Thus, this assessment highlights the role of PD in not only changing parenting styles but improving parental well-being.

5.2. Discussion on PD and Self-efficacy of Chinese Parents

Additionally, highly significant parenting self-efficacy after the intervention aligned with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Self-efficacy is the key determinant of human motivation and action (Bandura, 2001). The results highlight the boost brought about by the PD intervention. Subsequently, it accounts for parents' faith in influencing their children's behaviour in a positive manner, which consequently would account for their heightened psychological resilience and reduced stress. For parents, strong self-efficacy enhances the probability of employing effective, consistent, and positive practices even in the presence of stress, which promotes improved child and family outcomes. Bandura pointed out that self-efficacy is established through mastery experiences, observing others, social persuasion, and interpreting one's emotional state (Bandura, 2001). Thereby, it would make the parents sensitive to PD intervention. The findings also align with the Family Systems Theory, whereby perspective is gained by the relation of parenting style to self-efficacy and stress, describing how changes within an individual parent are related to broader family function (Rothbaum et al., 2002). Thus, intervention of PD aids the Chinese parents in gaining a perspective, which in turn helps them in overcoming the stress.

Most importantly, the findings in the Chinese culture context align with previous studies. Liu et al. (2024) stated that PD had a significant positive impact on parenting self-efficacy and emotional resilience among Chinese mothers. Similarly, Fatima et al. (2022) indicated that non-punitive discipline strategies in rural China were linked to improved emotional and cognitive development in children. These studies are consistent with the efficacy of PD across various Chinese settings. Other international research has also reported the same advantages. While the study measured parental well-being, the role of parenting style must be considered as well. For instance, studies has shown that increased parental self-efficacy predicted

reduced parenting stress in different cultural contexts (Boruszak-Kiziukiewicz & Kmita, 2020; Goodman et al., 2022; Rothbaum et al., 2002; Witkowski, 2017). While Gallitto (2021) highlighted that PD programs enhanced both parenting confidence and child behaviour outcomes. While these studies support the current findings, they pave the way for developing practical implications in the Chinese cultural context.

One of the most important aspects of this study dealt with the boundaries of positive discipline in a Chinese cultural framework, along with its surrounding parenting practices. It includes the “culture of being Chinese,” and also filial piety and education. While positive discipline ensures compliance and respect, it does not conform to an authoritarian or overly strict style of discipline, which is a hallmark of Chinese parenting practices. The results showed that self-efficacy after PD intervention had also improved. Such changes can be explained through changes in the parental behaviour that is often brought by positive discipline. For example, letting the children speak and using positive discipline encouraged better compliance with fewer behaviour problems. Opposed to Chinese strict parenting practices, PD entails combining warmth and structure, providing emotional safety and compliance.

However, Chinese parents may face cultural mobility challenges. For some parents, fully embracing positive discipline might be difficult due to parental norms and pressure to parent high-achievers. As stated in earlier research, Chinese parents have tremendous stress of their children’s education, which further makes them rely on punitive discipline (Lan et al., 2019). These issues can be more effectively dealt with in the future by developing non-punitive disciplinary interventions that also incorporate Chinese cultural aspects. Moreover, parents tend to be more concerned and active participants in the children’s education at school which translates to more tangible decisions by practitioners in policies or parenting programs. Therefore, further Parenting Workshops, Community and Primary Care Based Clinics, Multi-Family Therapy Programs could be some comprehensive approaches that support Chinese parents in implementing positive discipline. Community-based and workshop programs can help in ameliorating the gap between modern and traditional parenting practices.

5.3. Discussion on Practical Implications

The practical implications encompass parents. Firstly, not only should programs instruct in parenting skills but also offer support and encouragement of an emotional kind to make sure parents internalize their capability for effective management of children. These would be based on

the significant predictive link between self-efficacy and low stress. Secondly, culturally sensitive PD workshops that abide by traditional family structures without promoting disrespect or egalitarianism could mediate between Western models and Chinese cultural norms. Thus, training programs should specifically teach authoritative parenting styles, combining responsiveness with clear boundaries. Lastly, public health and education policymakers in China need to explore incorporating PD programs into family support programs at schools or community health program initiatives.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the efficacy of Positive Discipline (PD) in promoting positive parenting efficacy and wellbeing among Chinese parents. Based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Adlerian theory informing PD, and Family Systems Theory, the research offered empirical data substantiating the interrelatedness between parenting confidence, behavior, and emotional well-being. The results showed that parents in the PD intervention reported low to moderate levels of parenting stress, high levels of parenting self-efficacy, and a stronger inclination toward authoritative parenting.

The results from the subjective well-being assessment showed PD can bring about emotional well-being among the parents. Such results emphasize the life-changing effect of PD on both parental behavior and mindset, further strengthening its relevance in Chinese family settings. Within the context of modern Chinese society, high academic pressures, shifting family structures, and dwindling traditional support systems, PD offers a useful model. It facilitates harmonious, respectful parent-child relationships without undermining authority or discipline. Contrary to authoritarian practices traditionally prevalent in Chinese families, PD helps equip parents with measures to develop emotional control, mutual responsibility, and respect, thus leading to domestic harmony and child well-being.

In practice, the recommendations would be incorporating PD programs into school-community collaborations, parenting courses, and social service programs. Additionally, government and policy agencies might look into making PD training part of family wellness programs, particularly in urban areas where parenting stress tends to be amplified. Subsequently, teachers and mental health practitioners can embrace PD as a fundamental component of parenting education to assist in mitigating parental burnout and enhancing parent-child relationships. Providing ongoing assistance and direction to parents can strengthen their parenting confidence and ensure long-term

intervention success. Future study should focus on how group treatments may effectively incorporate healthy habits into middle childhood routines.

7. Limitations

Though the study found strong implications of PD, there could be significant limitations. The study did not include a control group, whereby, there is a lack of comparison group questions the possibility of whether external factors would have affected the results. Second, the research was based solely on self-report measures, which are vulnerable to social desirability and recall bias. Additionally, the period for intervention was only six weeks which could be relatively short, thereby it could have fail to produce the desired change. Therefore, further research is warranted in this context. For future studies, longitudinal designs are suggested to evaluate the long-term sustainability of PD effects. Additionally, qualitative approaches would add depth by ascertaining parents' lived experiences and cultural meanings of PD. Additional investigations of father involvement, co-parenting impacts, and rural-urban contrasts would further enhance the knowledge base.

Data Availability Statement

The data required for understanding the study is presented within the paper. Further inquiries can be made for disclosure of data.

Author Contributions

The author is solely responsible for data collection, analysis and draft.

Funding

The study was not associated with any financial support.

Conflict of Interest

The research was done without any commercial or financial links that may lead to a conflict of interest.

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Appendix

*****Questionnaire for Pre-test and Post-test intervention*****

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

2. Select your age group from below:

- 25 to 30
- 31 to 35
- 36 to 40
- 41 to 45

3. What is the age of the child who are within the age range of 6 to 12 years?

.....

Brief parental Self Efficacy Scale:

4. Even though I may not always manage it, I know what I need to do with my child.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

5. I am able to do the things that will improve my child's behaviour.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

6. I can make an important difference to my child.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

7. In most situations I know what I should do to ensure my child behaves.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

8. The things I do make a difference to my child's behaviour.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

GHQ Subjective Well-Being Questionnaire:

9. Been able to concentrate on whatever you are doing

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

10. Lost much sleep over worry

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

11. Felt that you are playing a useful part in things

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

12. Felt capable of making decisions about things

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

13. Felt constantly under strain

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

14. Felt you could not overcome your difficulties

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

15. Been able to enjoy your normal 2 day-to-day activities

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

16. Been able to face up to your problems

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

17. Been feeling unhappy and depressed

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

18. Been losing confidence in yourself

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

19. Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

20. Been feeling reasonably happy all things considered

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree