

## **Parenting Lessons from Bringing Up Bébé: A Comparative Analysis with Islamic Education for Character Building**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examines the parenting principles from Pamela Druckerman's Bringing Up Bébé within the framework of Islamic education, with a focus on character building in early childhood. By employing a qualitative and descriptive-analytic approach, the research compares key parenting practices such as discipline, self-control, independence, and communication, highlighting their alignment with Islamic values. The findings demonstrate significant parallels between French parenting techniques and Islamic teachings, particularly in fostering discipline and respect. By integrating these principles into Indonesian parenting practices, the study offers actionable insights for addressing contemporary parenting challenges while preserving Islamic values. This research underscores the universality of effective parenting methods and recommends further exploration of their applicability across diverse cultural and religious contexts.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Parenting is how parents guide and educate their children from infancy to adulthood ([Trisnawaty, 2023](#)). This process covers various important aspects of a child's life, such as character, moral, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual formation. In Islam, parenting is also seen as part of parents' responsibility to prepare children not only for the life of the world but also for the afterlife. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an Surah At-Tahrim verse 6: "*O you who believe, protect yourselves and your families from the fire of hell whose fuel is man and stone.*" From the perspective of Islamic education, parenting focuses on cultivating religiosity and character building ([Arief & Afnanda, 2021](#); [Karimullah, 2023](#)).

The importance of this responsibility is further emphasized during the early stages of a child's life. Hurlock, a psychology expert, stated that the crucial period of parenting, since early childhood, especially at 0 to 4 years, is known as the golden age period. This phase is important for forming character and good habits; once formed, these patterns will remain and affect the child's life in the future ([Chapnick, 2015](#); [Hurlock, 1980](#)). That is reinforced by research conducted after 10 years by Baumrind on preschoolers who have become teenagers, and it is proven that parenting impacts children ([Baumrind et al., 2010](#)). The family as a minor institution and parents as the first teachers have a strong influence on these stages ([Adadau et al., 2023](#); [Makagingge et al., 2019](#); [Maulina & Budiyo, 2021](#); [Purnamasari, 2017](#)).

Baumrind suggests four types of parenting patterns that affect the development of children's character, namely authoritarian, permissive, authoritative/democratic, and neglectful patterns ([Lanjekar et al., 2022](#); [Martinez-Escudero et al., 2020](#)). Authoritarian parenting tends to dominate and does not provide space for children to express their impact on children to be aggressive, less motivated, afraid to argue, angry, and quiet ([Lin et al., 2023](#)). Authoritative (democratic) parenting, which gives freedom but with precise control, makes children have good character and good social attitudes ([Gimenez-Serrano et al., 2022](#)). Permissive parenting, which is very tolerant but less consistent in setting rules, impacts children being less independent, unable to control themselves, less sensitive, and irritable ([Cucu Ciuhan, 2024](#)). Meanwhile, neglectful parenting, where parents do not give enough attention or control to children so that children are easily swayed, does not have a stand ([Gimenez-Serrano et al., 2022](#)).

However, today's parenting challenges are increasingly complex, especially in the fast-paced and stressful modern world. Parents, especially mothers, feel pressured by the demands of work and social life and feel less confident in making decisions that are best for their children as they try to break the generational trauma that may be passed on from generation to generation ([Reese et al., 2022](#)).

The number of working mothers in Indonesia continues to rise ([Izza & Andromeda, 2019](#)). It creates a dilemma regarding the balance between work and parenting. The guilt often comes with comparing oneself to seemingly perfect standards on social media can also add to the psychological pressure for parents, especially mothers.

A report in 2024 examined 3,000 households in the sample. About 2,942, or more than 98%, of the primary caregivers were mothers. This shows that in Indonesia, mothers predominantly take the lead role in childcare ([Bank,](#)

2024). 57% of mothers in Indonesia experience baby blues or postpartum stress ([Prameswari, 2024](#)).

In the midst of these challenges, Pamela Druckerman's book *Bringing Up Bébé* ([Druckerman, 2020](#)) became a world bestseller. The book provides insights into successful parenting in France. It represents how French parents successfully educate their children to be independent, calm, and well-behaved, even at a very young age ([Druckerman, 2020](#)).

In the book, Druckerman herself began to realize the calmness of French children when eating in a restaurant. French children sit quietly and eat alone. At the same time, she and her husband had to take turns looking after her daughter. The French child and her daughter were the same age, around eighteen months. So, the important success of this parenting method is the ability to prioritize the well-being of the parents while still paying attention to the child's growth and development ([Druckerman, 2020](#)).

*Bringing Up Bébé* adopts a non-religious approach, but many of its principles can be adapted to the Indonesian cultural context ([Rahmawati, 2020](#); [Riany et al., 2016](#)). Indonesian culture itself is thick with religious values. Andriani and Rachmawati revealed that a religious approach is taken when multiethnic parents cannot find a bright spot in parenting ([Andriani & Rachmawati, 2022](#)). Considering that Indonesia has a majority Muslim population ([Formichi, 2021](#)), there needs to be a further study of the relevance of the parenting principles in the book *Bringing Up Bébé* with the perspective of Islamic education, especially in the context of early childhood character building.

While studies on parenting styles have extensively explored Western frameworks, limited research integrates these perspectives with Islamic educational principles, particularly in shaping early childhood character. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the adaptability of French parenting practices within an Islamic context.

In this study, the researcher intends to analyze the relevance of the parenting patterns described in the book *Bringing Up Bébé* with the perspective of Islamic education, especially in early childhood character building. By understanding parenting from this perspective, it is hoped that methods can be found that can help parents in Indonesia raise children more effectively and balanced while still prioritizing Islamic religious values that are important in the formation of children's character.

## **METHOD**

This article is qualitative research. This type of research considers that truth is complex and interpretative, so it is not bound by one theory ([Sugiyono, 2022](#)). This research is classified as library research using descriptive-analytical methods. Data sources are divided into two: primary and secondary. The primary source of this research is the book *Bringing Up Bébé* by Pamela Druckerman. In comparison, secondary sources include other references relevant to the topic sourced from books, articles, and other research documents.

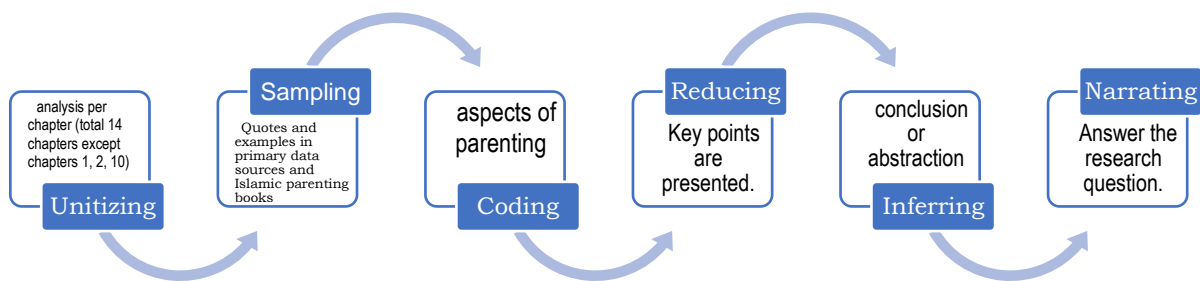
The research instrument is the researcher himself (human instrument), whose function is to determine the focus, collect and sort data, analyze and interpret, and interpret data and conclude. Other instruments include a checklist of research material classification, writing schemes, and research

notes. Data collection techniques using documentation. Data validity checking uses source triangulation by describing, categorizing, and drawing conclusions from data obtained from different sources, done repeatedly.

The approach used in this analysis adopts Baumrind's theory regarding four aspects of parental behavior in parenting, namely 1) parental control, how parents control and instill specific standards in children. 2) Parental maturity demands that parents instill a sense of responsibility in children. 3) Parent-child communication, how parents build communication. 4) Parental nurturance, how parents encourage children's potential and provide affection

Data were analyzed using Krippendorff's content analysis, focusing on key themes aligned with Baumrind's parenting framework. The content analysis process goes through six stages (Krippendorff, 2013), including 1) Unitizing, 2) Sampling, 3) Recording/coding, 4) Data Reducing, 5) Abductively inferring, and 6) Narrating. The data analysis steps are presented in Figure 1 as follows:

Figure 1. Data Analysis Steps



Bringing Up Bébé consists of 14 chapters. In this study, only 11 chapters were analyzed because chapters 1, 2, and 10 are Druckerman's stories when she was pregnant and gave birth to her children. So, it is not included in the process of her interactions with her children. Then, in this case, sifting is done by collecting sentences that indicate the parenting process. Then, using different highlighters, coding using numbering according to Baumrind's four aspects of parenting behavior. Then, the presentation of key points was summarized and became the basis for answering research questions. Finally, it is narrated according to the research objectives. The study adhered to ethical standards by ensuring credibility through source triangulation and iterative validation of findings.

## RESULT

The findings show some key aspects of French parenting that can be used as examples and reflections, especially in shaping children's character and habits, such as self-control, discipline, independence, politeness, and open communication. Some of the important findings obtained from this research include:

### 1) Clear and Consistent Boundary Implementation

The first step French parents take in parental control is to create a *cadre*. A *cadre*, or a frame, involves setting clear boundaries within which they can do whatever they want. The *cadre* is meant to be predictive, not restrictive.

French parents implement an organized schedule for the child's daily activities, such as eating, playing, and sleeping, to develop good habits. Children are trained to sleep at night from infancy, meaning 8-9 hours of sleep without waking up. Parents give a short pause (*la pause*) when the child wakes up at night. French parents take a non-interventive approach to their babies. They will observe for 5-10 minutes when the baby wakes up at night. Does the baby need to eat, or is it waking up from its sleep cycle? The treatment was successful, and the baby was able to sleep on his own from the age of 3 to 6 months. "...her 3.5-month-old son had a 12-hour long sleep from 8:00 pm to 8:00 am," she said ([Druckerman, 2020](#)).

Regarding eating, children are gradually taught national meal times from infancy. That is breakfast at 7 or 8 am, lunch at 12, snack or *goûter* around 4.00 pm. And dinner around 8.00 pm before bedtime. Outside these hours, children are not allowed to eat. For example, 30 minutes short of meal time, parents will say, "Wait 30 more minutes, we eat together". The behavior of French parents, who form such a culture, makes children more patient. In addition, when children feel hungry, they eat whatever is served. It makes them not picky eaters. Another *cadre* is about eating sweets. Sweet food is an enemy for children because it causes dental caries. French children are not prohibited from eating sweets, but they can only consume them on certain occasions, such as birthday parties. For example, if they want chocolate, the limit is *goûter time*.

Children who want to play are also given restrictions. For example, when it is nighttime, and the child is still playing when it is time to sleep, parents will compromise by saying, "At bedtime, you go to the room, and when you are inside, you are free to do anything." It can be understood that children do not necessarily have to follow their parents' wishes. Limits made by parents are continuously repeated to children. An organized schedule lets children know what to do.

In Islam, the concept of order and routine in daily life has been taught. The most obvious example is the five daily prayers. If you look at the Prophet's eating pattern, he ate when he was hungry: "We are a people who do not eat before we are hungry and when we eat we are not full." (Hadith narrated by Abu Dawud). The Apostle recommended eating at night, but in another hadith, he also said, "The Rasullah hated sleeping before the *isha'* prayer and chatting afterward." (Hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). So it can be understood that the Apostle ate before *Isha'* if calculated in the Indonesian time zone around 7-8 pm.

About playing, the Prophet realized that the world of children is playing. The Apostle set an example by freeing children to play during the day, but children must stay home at night to avoid danger.

The consistent and precise application of boundaries or *cadre* can be successful because:

- a. Gradual encouragement to follow a schedule of eating, playing, sleeping
- b. Consistent with the boundaries that have been established
- c. Frequently reviewing the *cadre* itself
- d. Making allowances for vacations
- e. Parental trust that the child can follow the rules made.

## 2) Teaching Courtesy and Responsibility

Parental behavior in an effort to instill the importance of a sense of responsibility or parental maturity demands reprimanding children when they are disrespectful even though they are still small. For example, children who are just learning to walk then drop things. Then, as an adult, the child is given the understanding that he should not behave in this way and return the item to its place. Not normalizing that he is still a child. Often, French parents reprimand children with 'we' diction, such as "We should not do this." or use the word rights, "You have no right to do that. It is said in a low, confident tone, not shouting but firmly.

Children are also taught how to respect others with *bonjour* (hello) and *au revoir* (goodbye), in addition to the words please, sorry, excuse me, thank you. Sometimes, children say inappropriate, dirty words. Which they accidentally hear. When forbidden, they will say it even more. When the child does this, the child will be sat down and advised that the child may say this as long as it is with a note, when the child is alone in the bathroom, when with friends, it is not allowed, with the mother and father it is not allowed, on the street it is not allowed. So, the rules are explicitly known to the child. When left with other people, parents do not say, "Do not be naughty," but "Behave properly; you lead yourself." So, the child is given responsibility.

Saying greetings teaches children to respect others and prevents selfishness. Guiding children to use the right words when expressing negativity helps them not to feel confused, as children tend to rebel. Parents cannot simply forbid children without giving an apparent reason.

## 3) Building Open and Effective Communication

Parenting in Bringing Up Bébé emphasizes the importance of communication between parents and children. The relationship between children and parents is not between bosses and subordinates but equal people. French parents emphasize the importance of clarity and openness in communication. They not only give directions but also give clear reasons for every rule applied. Parents trust and believe that children will understand and obey the rules mutually agreed upon, which is also reinforced by the consistent attitude of parents.

Druckerman in his book describes *éducation*. At that time, his son kept trying to get out of the sandbox and wanted to jump over the fence. Druckerman, of course, forbade her son to do so. She then approached her 2-year-old son, Leo, scolded and dragged him back, but he continued doing the same thing as if he had no deterrent. Druckerman said, "Frederique tells me you have to say 'no' and be more convincing. No need to shout. Just speak more convincingly. On the fourth try, I finally had full confidence. Leo approached the gate, but miraculously, he did not open it. He looked back and gave me a worried look. I glared in disapproval. Ten minutes later, Leo did not try to leave again ([Druckerman, 2020](#)). Parents' beliefs and self-confidence make their children realize the authority of their parents.

A child will confront if it is not to their liking. When children cry because they want something, they will let them cry to express their disappointment. Nevertheless, parents will be firm with their decisions. French parents give a time lag or waiting time. For example, "Wait two minutes, my daughter, I am in a conversation." Two minutes later, the parent comes to the child.

Thus, parents take steps to build effective communication, and children also realize that their parents are the authority of every decision. They speak softly, give explicit waiting time to children, and are firm with the decisions that have been made.

#### **4) Free Play Encouragement**

Parents' behavior in interpreting their affection for children (parental nurturance) by giving children the freedom to play. Parents also set aside time to pamper themselves by still meeting with friends, not accompanying the child all day, and letting the child grow according to the process.

French parents are not in a hurry to let their children do things prematurely. Parents take the child to the field daily and then let the child play as he wishes. He can run, jump, and fall a hundred times. Not for cognitive advancement at school but for psychological strength ([Druckerman, 2020](#)). Meanwhile, parents will chat with other parents and not let go of their supervision. The education system in France supports this. Children are only taught to read in *maternelle* (preschool) when they are 6. So parents are also not burdened by their expectations when they see other children have achieved a lot.

## **DISCUSSION**

Parenting is a complex activity of parents towards children in providing physical care, improving children's intellectuality through impulses, teaching manners and morals to prepare them for society, and providing love and security for their psychology. Building a child's character is initiated early because it is a gradual process that requires significant time and effort.

Based on the results of previous research, many parenting concepts applied by French parents can be adapted in the Indonesian context, especially in creating a balanced parenting between freedom and control. Forming children who have independence, are calm, are full of responsibility, and have character.

Many parents, especially Indonesian mothers, are already working. So these conditions align with French women who still look elegant and occupy prestigious jobs but can still raise children well. Some of the main points that can be taken as lessons and reflections, both from the perspective of Western (French) and Islamic parenting, include:

### **1) Self-Control and Discipline**

The first characteristic instilled in children is a sense of discipline and self-control through clear and consistent boundaries called *cadre*. The French are able to implement this because they believe that babies are rational beings who can understand what is happening around them ([Druckerman, 2020](#)). The concept that children are innate from birth aligns with the convergence theory proposed by William Stern ([Heinemann, 2023](#)).

However, this is certainly different from parenting in Indonesia, especially in the Javanese tribe, because children are considered not to understand the expectations and behaviors expected of them (*during ngerti*) ([Riany et al., 2016](#)). Align with this condition, in the concept of Islam, it is explained that children already carry the potential called fitrah, which is explained in the hadith which reads "Every child is born in a state of fitrah, so his parents make him a Jew, Christian or Magi" ([Mahfud, 2022](#)).

On the other hand, French parents' self-control treatment can be seen from night sleep training. Parents are not reactive and hold their children but observe. They wake up because they need their parents or wake up from their 2-hour sleep cycle ([Druckerman, 2014](#)). Scientifically, as Bilgin and Wolke point out, allowing a baby to cry for a while will not adversely affect its future but instead provide an opportunity for it to self-regulate ([Bilgin & Wolke, 2020](#)).

It contrasts with what happens in most Asian countries, including Indonesia. Babies who do not sleep at night are considered normal even though it reduces the quality of sleep of the parents and will impact the parents' daily activities ([Retnosari et al., 2021](#)). Sleep deprivation in infants is also bad for parents. In the Islamic concept, the Prophet himself pointed out that night sleep is indeed done after performing the *Isha* prayer ([Erhamwilda et al., 2022](#)).

In teaching sleep, it can be interpreted that since the baby is born, parents in France have been training self-control by giving a short pause. Self-control is significant for a child's future. Childhood self-control is twice as important as intelligence in predicting academic achievement ([Degol & Bachman, 2023](#)). Conversely, poor self-control in the early years increases the risk of financial difficulties in adulthood, criminal behavior, single parenthood, and drug dependence ([Robson et al., 2020](#)).

Implementing a structured schedule when eating or playing makes children disciplined. The schedule is a certainty. The schedule does not torment children because they are used to it. In this regard, according to Nelson et al., children do need clear communication about expectations, rules, and limits without overriding the value of love ([Bornstein et al., 2021](#)).

Exercising self-control and discipline in daily life is undoubtedly relevant to Islamic education. The concept of Islamic teachings in worship and business requires these characteristics. Prayer has an explicit time, so it needs time and discipline. Children who are accustomed to praying at a young age will be more likely to do so in the future. Imam Al-Ghazali said that clear and consistent limits and rules need to be set by parents for their children ([Fayzullaeva, 2022](#)). Not only to build good character but also to help them understand and respect religious and moral authority. Thus, there are similarities between French Parenting and Islam in that self-control and a sense of discipline are important to instill from a young age.

## **2) Teaching politeness and a sense of responsibility**

Respect, mutual respect, and responsibility in parent-child relationships or with the surrounding environment must be planted and strengthened early. Politeness often declines when children reach school age due to a lack of a strong foundation built through upbringing. It is important to recognize that politeness is about respect and behavior ([Brown et al., 2023](#); [Jucker, 2020](#)).

The treatment of French adults makes the understanding of manners in children successful. It is not only parents who teach politeness but also the neighborhood. Adults tend to reprimand in a good way directly ([Porter, 2002](#)) instead of excusing them because they are still young. However, it is still important that parents use kind and encouraging ways to reprimand students ([Grogan-Kaylor et al., 2021](#)) instead of punishing them with violence.

The French culture of greeting people with *bonjour* and *au revoir* also plays an important role in instilling the character of respect for others



[\(Oliviera, 2020\)](#). This practice teaches children to foster mutual respect and reinforces social harmony in daily interactions.

Cultivating greetings is very relevant to the concept of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad once gave an example of greeting. What is more beautiful in Islam is that whoever comes, then he gives greetings.

In this regard, there is a hadith that reads as follows:

Shu'bah reported from Sayyâr, who said: "I was walking with Šabit al-Bunnâni, he passed by some small children, then he greeted them," Šabit said: "I once walked with Anas, he passed by some children, then Anas greeted them," Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "I was walking with Rasûlullâh Šalallâhu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam and he passed by some small children and greeted them" (hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi number 2696).

In another hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah, the Messenger of Allah (saw) about how to say greetings:

'Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: 'Let the small greet the elder, let the one who is walking greet the one who is sitting, and let the few greet the many' (Muttafaq alaih). According to the Muslim narration, 'And those who ride to those who walk' ([Al-Atsqalani, 2017](#)).

Children sometimes utter profanities that they pick up from their neighborhood. In French culture, some parents call it *bêtise* (petty mischief) when children do this. They will teach the child to use profanity appropriately. It falls within a clear *cadre* or boundary ([Druckerman, 2014, 2020](#)). In contrast, this value is not relevant to the concept of Islam because cursing others is not recommended at all. Instead of cursing, the Prophet taught humankind to do istighfar or say "*innalillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un.*"

According to the author, the parenting patterns applied by French parents to instill the values of politeness are 1) Openness, parents tend to communicate directly related to politeness rather than tolerating it 2) Positive attitude, parents' responses tend to be firm when children do things that are not right when previously relaxed 3) Equality, often linking with rights and using the word *we* 4) Empathy, where the child's perspective is listened to even if the result is different.

Islamic teachings and parenting in *Bringing Up Bébé* agree that morals should be introduced, instilled, and taught early. French parenting can be used to emphasize modesty and not hinder a country's progress.

Guiding children about morals does not take away a child's right to free expression. However, it is intended for children to be able to take responsibility for their every behavior by considering ethical and moral values to create a healthy and prosperous environment. When children can take responsibility and respect others, they will become confident, have self-esteem, and can solve problems ([Nastiti, 2022](#)).

### **3) Equality in communication**

Parenting is also inseparable from communication. How parents bond with their children and instill certain rules or standards depends on how they communicate.

French parents' efforts in establishing parent-child communication are carried out on all fronts, and parents discipline their children in a firm but not harsh manner. Children also obey their parents, as they realize that the

authority in the family is the parents. This authority works because there is a strong bond between parents and children. French children trust their parents and vice versa ([Druckerman, 2014, 2020](#)).

When enforcing a rule or prohibition, French parents take steps: 1) speak softly and make eye contact with the child with the reason. 2) using the significant eyes method and a firm low tone, shouting only for issues that need to be emphasized. 3) the child is given space to make decisions, and there is time for compromise between the child and the parent. This step also applies when parents say no. 4) Parents trust and expect their children to obey ([Druckerman, 2014, 2020](#)).

The success of this communication pattern is that French children can have an opinion. They also know their parents' expectations of them. Parents themselves appreciate that even children can have secrets. Meanwhile, parents know their children's development because children also volunteer to share their daily activities.

There is relevance in building communication between *Bringing Up B  b  * parenting and Islam, namely communicating openly and gently. What is different is that a Muslim also adds elements of prayer and tawakal when talking to their children. Perhaps speaking softly will be challenging in Indonesia, especially in coastal areas, because living by the beach makes them loud because they struggle with the sound of the waves. However, the common point is that the principle applied is not the intonation used. What needs to be underlined is that parents speak in a firm tone, not shouting, children have an equal place so that they listen to each other, and trust means that parents have hope that children will one day follow their parents' words.

The Islamic perspective, which is enshrined in the Quran, explains how effective communication is found in QS. Ali Imran verse 159 ([Shihab, 2007](#)) includes: 1) asking Allah to be able to speak and be gentle with children and to be kept away from being harsh and speaking harshly. If children are distant, opening up to their parents will be difficult. 2) forgive their mistakes and ask for forgiveness for their children. 3) invite children to deliberation or discussion; parents must consider suitable communication methods when deliberating. 4) If a decision has been made in deliberation or discussion, you should put your trust in Allah. After deliberating and agreeing on the discussion results with the child, parents should not be prejudiced that the child does not comply with the results. Parents must know the child's character.

The Prophetic Hadith also narrates that Prophet Muhammad was once invited to a gathering and then served a drink. His custom was to give the rest of his drink to the right side. It so happened that on the right side was a small child, Ibn Abbas r.a while. On his left side was Khalid bin Walid, the great commander of Islam. The Apostle wisely asked the little boy's permission, and water was given to him or the dignitary. So, it can be understood that the Apostle also realized the existence of a child, giving them the opportunity to have their say ([Suwaid, 2010](#)).

#### **4) Freedom of expression with play**

Play is as vital to children as work is to adults. Hurlock emphasizes that through play, children acquire essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and emotional expression ([Hurlock, 2011](#)). Similarly, Erikson's developmental theory highlights two critical stages within the first two years of life: autonomy vs. shame and doubt ([Gross, 2020](#)). These stages

are pivotal for a child's mental and motor development. Autonomy is fostered when children are encouraged to explore independently, while over-involvement and impatience from parents can lead to feelings of shame and doubt ([Salmin et al., 2021](#)).

One contemporary phenomenon of concern is the "child-king" syndrome, where children exhibit tantrum behaviors when their demands are unmet. This behavioral pattern often arises when parents relinquish their authority, responding to tantrums with compliance. Over time, children learn to associate screaming or other disruptive behaviors with achieving their goals. Research by Khadijah and Sukmalara underscores the importance of balanced parenting—combining firmness with affection—to mitigate the risk of temper tantrums ([Khodijah & Sukmalara, 2019](#)).

As explored in the book *Bringing Up Bébé*, French parenting practices emphasize allowing children to develop naturally according to their developmental stage. Research trends in developmental psychology support that child-led growth fosters well-rounded development, particularly in social, emotional, and psychological domains ([Mateos-Blanco et al., 2022](#)).

As described in the literature, French parents often encourage autonomy by creating an environment where children are free to explore and engage in self-directed play. This approach aligns with findings from Alexander and Sandahl, who argue that children benefit more from opportunities to discover their interests than adult-led activities ([Song, 2024](#)). Studies suggest that such practices enhance creativity, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation ([Africa, 2024](#)) as children learn to independently navigate their preferences and challenges.

Similarly, the Islamic education perspective emphasizes the importance of play and physical activity in a child's growth and development, aligning with findings highlighting play's cognitive, emotional, and social benefits. The Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified this by valuing the playtime of his grandchildren, Hasan and Husain, underscoring that play is a natural and beneficial aspect of childhood. Islamic teachings encourage play to foster physical well-being, emotional resilience, and family bonding, provided it aligns with moral conduct and does not detract from religious duties ([Afrianti et al., 2023](#)).

In the Islamic tradition, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) demonstrated a deep respect for children's developmental needs, particularly their inclination toward play. It is reflected in his actions, such as when he allowed his grandson Husain's toy dog to remain in the house despite the angel Jibril's hesitation to enter and when he extended his prostration during prayer to accommodate his grandsons, Hasan and Husain, as they played on him.

The French parenting style, as described in *Bringing Up Bébé*, is predominantly democratic with authoritarian tendencies. This approach allows rules to be discussed with children, but the parents have the final decision-making authority, except in special situations like holidays. Such flexibility is balanced by providing children with significant autonomy within their world of play.

In comparison, Islamic parenting emphasizes firm yet compassionate guidance, aligning with the principles of *tarbiyyah* (nurturing). Islamic parents instill trust and discipline in their children through religious practices, such as teaching reliance on Allah and incorporating values like patience and repentance (e.g., saying *istighfar*). Research indicates that

religiously grounded parenting can reinforce moral development and strengthen the child-parent bond.

The following table shows the similarities and differences between parenting in *Bringing Up Bébé* and Islamic Perspective Parenting:

Table 1. Similarities and differences between parenting in *Bringing Up Bébé* and Islamic Perspective Education

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>French Parenting (Bringing Up Bébé)</b>	<b>Parenting from an Islamic Perspective</b>	<b>Relevances</b>
<b>Self-Control and Discipline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing discipline through clear boundaries (<i>cadre</i>)</li> <li>- Providing reflection space for the child</li> <li>- Great trust in children as rational beings</li> </ul>	The importance of discipline in carrying out worship and the rules of life	The character of self-control and discipline for children from an early age is important to form.
<b>Teaching politeness and a sense of responsibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teaching manners from an early age</li> <li>- Greeting others</li> </ul>	Children are taught to repent when saying dirty words or having negative emotions.	Politeness and a sense of responsibility become basic child behavior
<b>Equality in communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open communication by giving space for children to have their say</li> </ul>	In addition to listening to each other, also with elements of prayer and tawakkal	Both are in agreement that children need to be involved in making decisions about themselves.
<b>Freedom of expression with play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing freedom of play and exploration without excessive interference</li> </ul>	Play is part of development, as long as it does not conflict with religious teachings	The balance between parental authority and children's right to play

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the intersection of French parenting principles, as illustrated in Pamela Druckerman's *Bringing Up Bébé*, and Islamic educational values, emphasizing the importance of character building in early childhood. Key aspects of French parenting—such as establishing discipline through clear boundaries (*cadre*), fostering self-control, promoting politeness and responsibility, engaging in open communication, and encouraging autonomy through play—align significantly with Islamic principles prioritizing moral, spiritual, and social development.

The findings suggest that these French parenting methods can be adapted within the Indonesian context to address modern challenges while upholding Islamic values. Specifically, integrating structured routines and emphasizing respect and communication can benefit children's character formation and parental well-being. The congruence between Islamic teachings and French practices reinforces the universality of key parenting principles.

Future research should explore the empirical applications of these principles in diverse cultural settings to evaluate their effectiveness and adaptability further. Studies may also examine the role of fathers in parenting, an area less emphasized in this research, to present a more holistic perspective on family dynamics.

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