

INSTANT GRATIFICATION AND DIGITAL PEDAGOGY IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital pedagogy in Islamic higher education has opened new opportunities but also intensified the problem of instant gratification, where students seek quick answers and immediate satisfaction at the expense of patience, depth, and academic etiquette. While previous studies have examined the effects of instant gratification on academic performance, few have investigated its relationship with adab and ethical formation in higher education. Addressing this gap, the present study introduces the novelty of a conceptual framework called Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy, which integrates Western psychological theories of gratification with classical Islamic traditions of adab. The urgency of this research lies in the risk that digital education, if not guided by an ethical framework, may produce graduates who are technologically competent but weak in academic integrity. Using a library research method, this study analyzed contemporary literature, Islamic classical texts, and empirical studies on digital learning. The findings confirm that instant gratification correlates with superficial learning and digital distraction, while adab-based education enhances self-regulation, focus, and persistence in learning. The proposed conceptual model consists of two interrelated dimensions Cognitive-Ethical Balance and Value-Embedded Practice which together form a framework for integrating Islamic etiquette into digital pedagogy. Theoretically, this study enriches Islamic education discourse by bridging psychological and ethical traditions, and practically, it offers recommendations for lecturers and institutions to design digital learning strategies that maintain both intellectual depth and academic ethics.

Keywords: Digital Pedagogy, Instant Gratification, Academic Ethics, Islamic Education

BACKGROUND

The development of digital technology has changed the learning patterns of students in higher education, including Islamic universities (Ershova, 2019). The internet, Artificial Intelligence applications, and other online media do provide easy access to information, but they also encourage a tendency toward instant gratification, the desire for quick answers or satisfaction without going through a deep learning process (Hasanah, 2025). A study by Alkhirbash of Saudi students showed that students with a tendency to seek instant gratification tended to have lower academic achievement due to a lack of self-control and patience in the learning process (Alkhirbash, 2025).

Another study by Rahardi and Dartanto in Indonesia also found that the ability to delay gratification is positively related to learning achievement, this emphasizes the importance of patience in learning in the

digital era (Rahardi & Dartanto, 2021). This reality is that the significant impacts of the digital revolution have made instant culture, where everything is expected to be obtained quickly and easily. This culture makes people want to get things done quickly, without having to wait long and not want to be bothered. Ultimately, people will become lazy, wanting to produce everything quickly without having to work hard, even though maturity can only be achieved through a process (El Syam, 2020). This phenomenon has the potential to weaken the tradition of academic etiquette in Islamic education which emphasizes patience, thoroughness, respect for teachers, and continuous intellectual effort.

Previous studies have shown that instant gratification is closely related to digital distraction (Mushofa et al., 2025). A study on digital distractions in higher education showed that notifications, social media, and multitasking significantly reduced students' concentration and weakened their persistence in following lecturers' instructions (Pérez-Juárez et al., 2024). Several studies have shown that instant gratification behavior is linked to excessive use of digital technology, which can impact the ability to delay gratification, learning quality, and academic integrity. For example, the Internet Gratification Behaviors study found that instant gratification behavior via the internet can interfere with performance at school and work (Yin & Shen, 2023).

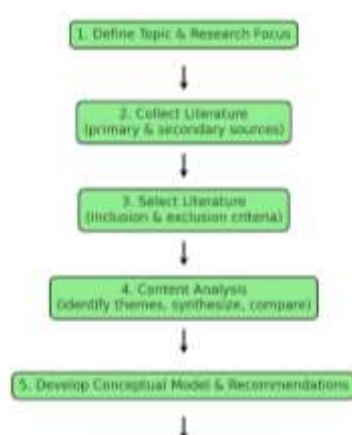
Furthermore, Manizia et.al investigated instant gratification among digital natives by measuring their ability to delay gratification, and found that although most were able to delay it, some showed a tendency towards impulsive behavior (Manizia et al., 2023). However, the relationship between instant gratification and learning etiquette in the context of Islamic higher education has not been thoroughly studied.

Based on this, a significant gap exists: although numerous studies have revealed the impact of instant gratification on academic achievement, no research has focused on its relationship to academic etiquette in Islamic higher education. Therefore, this research offers a novelty by synthesizing Western psychological literature on instant gratification with the Islamic educational tradition of etiquette, and developing a conceptual model of digital pedagogy that balances speed of information access with intellectual depth.

The urgency of this research lies in the fact that without an etiquette framework, the digitalization of education can produce an instant generation that is technically skilled but weak in academic integrity and attitudes. Therefore, the objectives of this study are: (1) to review the literature on instant gratification and etiquette in Islamic education, (2) to analyze the challenges of instant gratification in digital learning, (3) to develop a conceptual model of etiquette-based digital pedagogy, and (4) to provide practical recommendations for lecturers and Islamic educational institutions. The implications are that theoretically, this research enriches contemporary Islamic education studies by integrating Western theory with classical Islamic traditions, while practically, it provides digital learning strategies that maintain etiquette values while utilizing modern technology.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed library research, a qualitative method that relies on written sources such as books, journal articles, classical texts, digital documents, and other relevant literature (Creswell & Crswell, 2018). The aim of this method was to collect and analyze theories, previous findings, and ethical values from Islamic traditions relevant to the phenomenon of instant gratification in digital pedagogy. The stages of this research can be seen ini the picture below:



Picture 1. The stages of the research

Based on the picture, the steps in this research are as follows: 1. Determining the topic and focus of the Study to ensure the topic of instant gratification in digital pedagogy and academic etiquette in Islamic education and formulating the research question: "How do classical Islamic literature and contemporary research explain the impact of instant gratification on academic etiquette in digital learning?". 2. Collecting theoretical and empirical literature from valid online sources: Google Scholar, JSTOR, Springer, Sage, DOAJ, university libraries, and print editions, if available. 3. Literature Selection, literature that is topically relevant, recent (e.g., the last ten years for contemporary research), and credible (peer-reviewed, academic publishers). 4. Content Analysis. Read selected texts, highlighting key themes: the definition of instant gratification, the characteristics of academic etiquette in Islam (patience, respect, intellectual endeavor), and the positive/negative impacts of digital technology. 5. Develop a conceptual synthesis based on the findings, how etiquette can be used as a framework for digital pedagogy and then develop a conceptual model and recommendations. 6). Write and Verify Data (Zed, 2014).

RESEARCH FINDING

Tension between Instant Culture and Islamic Academic Etiquette

The findings of this study highlight the major aspects of the relationship between instant gratification, digital pedagogy, and academic etiquette in Islamic higher education.

The growing reliance on digital technology has reinforced students' tendency to seek instant gratification, often at the expense of in-depth learning. Yin, Shen, and Li demonstrated that compensatory beliefs in internet gratification behavior negatively impact academic performance (Yin & Shen, 2023). They demonstrated that reliance on quick answers available online actually decreases learning quality (Yin & Shen, 2023). Similar findings were revealed by Rahardi and Dartanto, who concluded that the ability to delay gratification significantly improves achievement among Indonesian students (Rahardi & Dartanto, 2021). Meanwhile, Prieto-Latorre emphasized that "ideal" internet use is positively correlated with academic success (Latorre et al., 2022), while excessive use of technology leads to poorer academic outcomes (Kuş, 2025). These findings consistently confirm that academic achievement is closely related to students' ability to delay gratification, rather than the pursuit of instant gratification.

Numerous empirical and conceptual studies demonstrate that the culture of instant gratification, the drive to obtain gratification as quickly as possible, directly conflicts with Islamic educational values

such as patience (sabr), polite manners toward teachers, intellectual depth, and respect. For example, the study "Digital Distractions in the Classroom Among Students" by Göl et al. found that high levels of digital distraction among university students were negatively associated with learning satisfaction and perceptions of learning: notifications, instant messaging, and off-task social media use reduced focus and the quality of the learning process (Göl et al., 2023). Martin's research also explains how technology design, personal tendencies, and environmental factors reinforce digital distractions as significant barriers to academic persistence (Martin et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, research on Adab-Based Education according to Imam Zarnuji by Husna confirms that adab education not only shapes morals but also supports students' cognitive and spiritual processes. Adab education is an aspect that integrates morality and knowledge, thus hopefully mitigating the negative effects of the instant gratification culture on learning (Amanatil Husna & Fahmi, 2025). Furthermore, Huda et al. observed that character/adab development, including respect, tolerance, and polite behavior (e.g., not using cell phones in class), is positively correlated with more stable and sustainable learning attitudes (Huda et al., 2023).

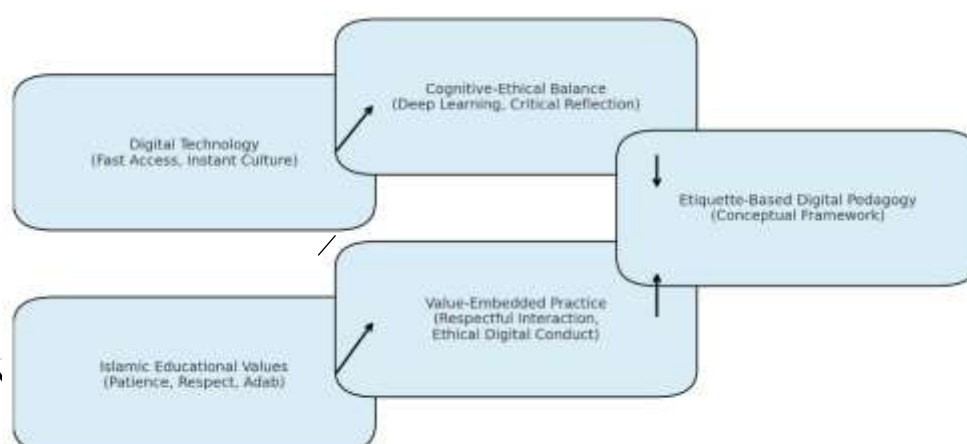
Another source, "The Concept of Adab-Based Education According to Buya Hamka" by Anriani et al, also supports the necessity of adab education as a basis for traditional Islamic values that can facilitate self-control and reduce the dominance of the desire for instant gratification in the educational process (Khoir et al., 2025). The combined results of these studies demonstrate that Instant Gratification (fast task completion assisted by AI, instant creation of work, digital multitasking, and the desire for information or quick responses) significantly contradicts the essence of the passion for seeking knowledge in Islamic education. Instant gratification significantly disrupts learning activities that require hard work, concentration, reflection, and in-depth study.

Islamic values such as patience, honesty, intellectual depth, and respect for teachers provide a moral and ethical framework that can counteract the negative influences of instant gratification. Thus, adab education serves not only as a moral guideline but also as a self-regulation mechanism, teaching students to control impulses, resist distractions, and maintain focus on the learning process. Through a literature analysis and a review of contemporary and local studies, it is evident that there is a significant conflict between the demands of a fast-paced digital culture and Islamic values in education. The principles of adab and patience are not merely moral ideals; they have also been empirically shown to enhance learning quality, focus, and academic persistence.

Conceptual Framework of Etiquette in Digital Pedagogy

The findings of this study underscore the urgency of developing a model of digital pedagogy grounded in etiquette (adab), especially within Islamic educational contexts, where moral formation and intellectual depth are intertwined. Such a framework must reconcile the speed and accessibility of digital technologies with the commitment to careful reflection, respect, and ethical conduct.

The model proposed here emphasizes embedding Islamic values particularly patience (sabr), respect (ihtiram), and learn to be sincere for Allah into every stage of digital learning, from design of learning activities to modes of teacher-student interaction, use of online platforms, and digital communication norms. The concept can be described as follows:



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Picture 2. Theoretical Framework of Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy

Conceptually, the framework consists of two core dimensions. The **first** dimension is cognitive-ethical balance: fast access to information and interactive digital resources is preserved, but tempered by strategies to encourage slow thinking, deep reading, critical inquiry, and sustained focus. This is supported by studies that show how adab helps in developing engagement and reducing superficial learning in digital settings (Rahmadi et al., 2024). The **second** dimension is value-embedded practice: digital etiquettes are set, such as respectful online communication, responsibilities in sharing/distributing information (Hasanah et al., 2022), honoring teachers, and cultivating humility in online discourse. This dimension is backed by conceptual studies on the adab of the learner and teacher (Sulaiman et al., 2021) and empirical findings from the teacher activity where adab implementation increased student engagement and positive social interactions.

By combining classical Islamic educational values (e.g. the works of Imam al-Nawawi on adab, respect, and teacher-student relations) with contemporary empirical evidence, this framework addresses the research objective stated in the introduction: namely, to develop a conceptual model of digital pedagogy rooted in Islamic etiquette, and to offer practical recommendations for educators and institutions. In practice, such a model might include guidelines for digital character/etiquette training, policy for online communication, teacher training in moral-ethical dimensions of digital pedagogy, and curricular design that integrates moments for reflection, self-regulation, and moral reasoning in digital tasks.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that instant gratification, while increasingly prevalent in Islamic higher education, threatens the ethical and intellectual foundation of university-level learning. In contrast to primary or secondary education, higher education emphasizes independent inquiry, critical thinking, and deep intellectual engagement. Yet, the culture of quick answers and immediate satisfaction erodes these very ideals. Yin and Shen (2023) showed that compensatory beliefs in internet gratification behaviors negatively affect academic performance, while Rahardi and Dartanto (2021) confirmed that students' ability to delay gratification significantly improves learning outcomes. These insights are particularly relevant for universities, where the development of maturity and patience in learning is central to academic formation (Amanatil Husna & Fahmi, 2025).

The challenge of digital distraction in higher education further illustrates this problem. University students are among the most exposed to notifications, multitasking, and social media use during lectures, which significantly reduces concentration and persistence in learning (Göl et al., 2023; Martin et al., 2025; Pérez-Juárez et al., 2024). These findings indicate that without proper regulation, students

in Islamic universities may gain technical proficiency but lack the intellectual discipline and academic ethics expected at the higher education level. This contradicts the Islamic tradition of adab, which regards patience, respect for teachers, and intellectual humility as essential for advanced scholarship (Sulaiman et al., 2021).

In the Indonesian context, adab-based education at the university level has been highlighted as a corrective approach to digital challenges. Husna and Fahmi (2025) emphasized that Imam Zarnuji's *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* provides enduring guidance for higher learning by insisting that students cultivate respect, self-control, and perseverance. Huda et al. similarly found that character and adab education in higher institutions across Indonesia, Turkey, and Japan strengthened tolerance and consistent learning attitudes (Huda et al., 2023). Khoir confirmed that Hamka's adab framework is highly relevant for contemporary Islamic universities, as it equips students with self-regulation against the culture of instant gratification (Khoir et al., 2025).

The Novel Contribution of Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy concept is to identifying the risks of instant gratification by proposing a novel conceptual framework of Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy (see Figure 2). Unlike previous research that either focused on the psychological dimension of gratification (Yin & Shen, 2023) or the normative discourse of adab (Husna & Fahmi, 2025), this study integrates both perspectives into a model specifically tailored for Islamic higher education. The framework consists of two interrelated dimensions:

First. Cognitive-Ethical Balance, ensuring that fast digital access and interactive learning tools are aligned with deep intellectual engagement, reflective thinking, and critical inquiry. This dimension responds directly to the problem of superficial learning and distraction commonly observed in digital learning environments. **Second,** Value-Embedded Practice, embedding Islamic values of adab, sabr, and respect into digital communication, online class interaction, and academic tasks. This dimension provides a practical guide for integrating moral-spiritual formation into the everyday use of digital platforms. Together, these two dimensions converge to form the Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy model, which offers both a corrective mechanism to resist instant culture and a constructive strategy to reframe digital learning as an ethical practice.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the rise of instant gratification in Islamic higher education has created tensions with the tradition of adab, patience, and intellectual depth, often leading to shallow learning and weakened academic ethics. To address this challenge, the research proposes a novel framework of Etiquette-Based Digital Pedagogy, which balances fast digital access with reflective learning and embeds Islamic values into digital practices. This model contributes both theoretically, by integrating Western gratification theory with Islamic educational traditions, and practically, by offering guidance for lecturers and institutions. Future research is recommended to empirically test this framework in Islamic universities, develop digital etiquette training modules, and explore its adaptability across diverse cultural contexts.

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