

## DISRUPTIVE CHANGE AND LEARNING INNOVATIONS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNIVERSITAS TERBUKA

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### ABSTRACT

Since Covid-19 pandemic hit the world at the beginning of 2020s, various efforts were made to keep the education process running while still enforcing protocols to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Online learning then becomes an option and inevitability for educational institutions to break the chain of spreading the virus. Furthermore, distance education (DE) has become the best choice for educational institutions in carrying out their learning activities. For Universitas Terbuka (UT), online learning is nothing new. As a pioneer of DE in Indonesia, UT is one step ahead of having strong experiences in open and distance learning practices and placing online learning as one of the main modes of learning delivery. Thus, UT has succeeded in making various breakthroughs ranging from registration, digital learning materials, synchronous and asynchronous academic support services, up to an online examination system equipped with online proctoring. The DE innovation developed by UT becomes a reference for other universities in Indonesia. With an integrated learning management system (LMS) and the number of alumni reaching up to 1.9 million, UT is able to carry out the Indonesia's government mandate in opening the widest possible access to education for Indonesian citizens, both domiciled in Indonesia and abroad.

**Keywords:** Disruptive change, learning innovations, UT's challenges and opportunities.

### INTRODUCTION

Disruptive change cannot be separated from the concept of disruptive innovation developed and introduced by Clayton Christensen (Meyer, 2010) which discusses how technology, inventions, and ideas are developed and then oppose traditional knowledge. This term is used to describe the process of changing the simple application of a product or service that can penetrate the top of the market and even replace established competitors. Based on this situation, disruptive innovation has inevitably influenced the rapid development of using technology in higher education in which people, especially educators, have to think in new ways in order to survive and thrive. In other words, it is very visible that capabilities in terms of performance relative to alternative approaches in higher education practices have also rapidly changed (Manyika, Chui, Bughin, Dobbs, Bisson, & Marrs, 2013). For instance, the technology innovations are implemented in

virtual chemistry labs and continued to increase for four reasons, i.e. continuing improvement, the ability of students, faculty, and parents to select a learning pathway that suits individual learners, teacher shortages, and falling costs (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008).

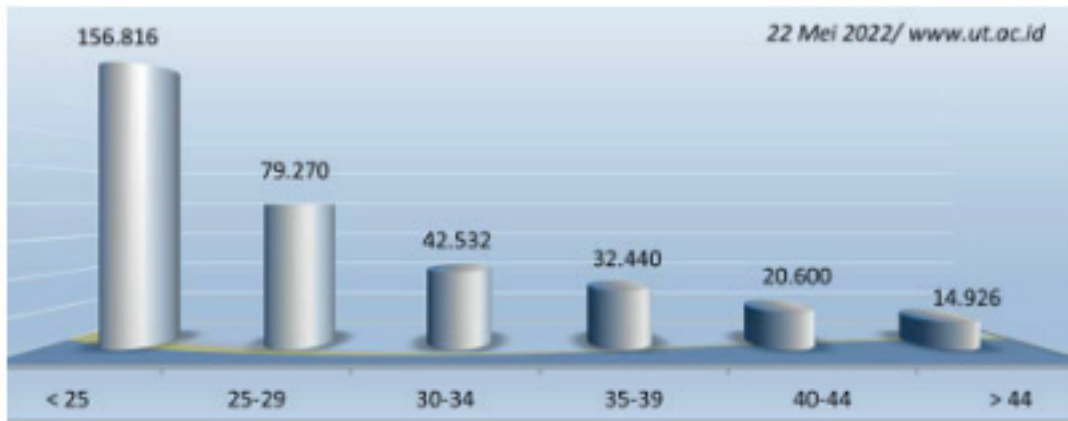
During the last three years, the impacts of Covid-19 outbreak have become significant considerations in practicing distance higher education as Bozkurt, et.al (2020) describes the examples, such as limited opportunity for education because of school shutdowns, the online learning practices resulting in “incomplete” learning, and health issues. Therefore, some ways to survive during the pandemic are required by schools and educators, such as building support communities, sharing tools and knowledge, and listening to different voices. This is in line with a study conducted by Masalimova, et.al (2022) in which students stated that online learning has the potential to take advantage of all the limitations caused by pandemic situations. Moreover, a study conducted by Coman, Tiru, Mesesan-Schmitz, Stanciu, & Bularca (2020) shows that the students also asserted that distance learning has also given benefits in their learning process since it enables them to conduct their own learning at any time and from any location as well as benefits both accomplishment and learning.

Universitas Terbuka (UT) is the 45th state university in Indonesia inaugurated by the President of the Republic of Indonesia on September 4, 1984, based on Presidential Decree Number 41 of 1984. UT was designed as an open university to apply distance learning. As a distance teaching university (DTU) applying open and distance learning (ODL), UT is expected to be the pioneer as well as the innovator of DTUs in Indonesia. Since its establishment, there are three main missions carried out by UT, i.e. (1) providing equitable access to higher education for community members, (2) increasing competence and academic qualifications for teachers and other government officials as well as people who are already working, and (3) providing opportunities for high school graduates/equivalent who are not accommodated in other state universities.

An open education system means that UT in providing education prioritizes and emphasizes the openness of the system which is the operationalization of the philosophy of lifelong education (without admission selection, without age restrictions, without geographical location restrictions, does not require a certain educational background, without a high school diploma year limit, without study period limits, and are multi-entry-multi-exit). This concept is in line with Laal & Salamati (2012) discussing lifelong learning as “a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, skills, and dispositions throughout one’s life to foster well-being”. Meanwhile, the distance education system means that UT encourages independent learning for students to be able to direct themselves in organizing the learning process and in utilizing the learning assistance services provided by UT. UT’s system and operations are designed to offer educational programs that can be accessed in a flexible, borderless and inclusive way. Thus, the open and distance education (ODE) system implemented by UT results in system flexibility and ensures public access to higher education in accordance with UT’s missions.

In general, UT education service modes can be categorized into two types. The first type is blended learning, designed as a type of learning service that combines face-to-face and digital approaches. This type is used by students who have low or limited access to infrastructure and ICT facilities that are not yet adequate in utilizing ICT for learning activities. This group of students usually comes from remote or suburban areas and is mostly more than 50 years old. Whereas the second type is fully online which is mostly used by students who have adequate access to ICT infrastructure and facilities as well as literacy and cultural skills. This group of students is usually young and comes from urban areas. As a state university that implements an ODE system, UT continues to improve the quality of both types of services and optimize the practice of modern ODE.

Since 2020, UT’s students have been dominated by those who are under 29 years old as illustrated below.



**Figure 1.** Student Body Based-on Ages

From the total active students of 346,584, as many as 156,816 or 42,25% are under 25 years old and 79,270 or 22,87% are between 25-29 years old. This shows that the number of millennial students as well as Generation (Gen) Y and Z of UT are increasing. One of the challenges faced by UT is how to facilitate the learning needs as well as learning styles of those of Gen Y and Z in which online interaction has become their way of life, especially for Gen Z students or known as i-gen (Black, 2010).

After implementing the ODE for 38 years and producing up to 2 million alumni, UT has proven to be able to reach groups of people who are unreachable by the face-to-face higher education institutions which also offer 'limited' access in age and length of study. UT services can be accessed through 39 regional offices spread across 34 provinces to serve students who live in 515 districts/cities in Indonesia and 1 overseas student service center to serve students in more than 50 countries or about 91 cities throughout the world. Furthermore, the ODE system implemented by UT has proven to be able to fulfill the mandate of the 1945 Constitution and embody the Government's obligation to provide access to higher education for all. This is in line with UT's motto "Making Higher Education Open to All".

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF E-LEARNING IN INDONESIA AND ITS CONDITION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for higher education in 2021, which only reached 30.85%, shows the low number of people receiving higher education due to the quality of government services in providing access to higher education (Statista, 2022). Therefore, the presence of DTUs is considered to open access to higher education services that existing conventional or face-to-face universities cannot afford. Furthermore, universities are also encouraged to make it efficient in that learners no longer merely rely on the existence of regular classes and conventional learning. Therefore, a blended learning system, online learning, and collaborations with other universities are needed. This allows cost effectiveness to produce more optimal output as well as encourage a revolution in the role of universities, lecturers, and students. Furthermore, organizations also consequently employ the learning management system (LMS) for driving skill development, employee training, and succession planning and are further used as learning platforms for compliance training by a government agency as well as an onboarding tool for new hires (Market Research, 2020).

Additionally, the government has prepared several regulations to encourage the development of the distance education system. Through Law Number 12 of 2012, the government explicitly states that the distance education system can be carried out in single mode and dual mode. This was confirmed by the issuance of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 109 of 2013 concerning the Implementation of Distance Education in Higher Education. The regulation provides an opportunity for all eligible universities to offer distance learning. Distance education and online learning are no longer a monopoly market controlled by UT but has been the priority of the government's programs to be implemented in several face-to-face or conventional universities. However, UT has realized that its presence is not a threat to UT but a prospective partner to synergize with each other to build the nation through distance education.

Their presence can be a stimulus and trigger to build a better work culture, build learning infrastructure facilities with the support of digital technology, and provide more quality learning programs and services.

The Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic has had a real impact on education resulting in the implementation of e-learning that was a necessity and the best choice for the world of education to ensure the fulfillment of student’s rights to education. It forces educational institutions to shift the learning process from face-to-face to online mode with limited resources and in a very short time. Regarding this matter, the Indonesian government has taken several precautions to maintain health and safety in preventing the Coronavirus. Among them with the issuance of the Circular Letter of the Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2020 concerning the Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19 in Higher Education.

The application of social and physical distancing is required in all educational activities. This was further strengthened by the issuance of the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 3 of 2020 concerning the Prevention of Covid-19 in Education Units. Furthermore, the next Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2020 was launched concerning Implementation of Educational Policies in the Future Emergency Spread of the Covid-19. All educational institutions must implement distance learning by the conditions of their respective universities. Students are encouraged to learn from home with online learning, both synchronously and asynchronously, through various platforms. On March 20, 2020, no less than 832 universities announced that they had moved their classes from face-to-face (classroom) to online learning. Various educational institutions have begun to use technology and implement online learning systems to support learning activities. Moreover, the pandemic situation forced all the students and teachers to do “Learning from Home”. There are three important points stated in the regulation. First, learning from home must be conducted through online platform/distance learning and should give meaningful learning experiences. Second, the learning activities must be focused on life skills. Third, the learning activities must be conducted based on students’ motivation and conditions by considering the access and facilities gaps (Moeldoko, 2020).



**Figure 2.** Online Learning Portals Officially in Partnerships with Indonesian Government

**Source:** The Ministry of Education and Culture - Indonesia

This policy has consequently raised several important issues. First, the teaching paradigm has shifted from face-to-face to virtual classrooms for all levels of education. The shift here is not only done by transferring the materials into digital formats but also by applying some rules. Online learning must be formulated and implemented carefully while prioritizing the interests and needs of students. Therefore, online learning apart from being a solution will also pose considerable challenges for lecturers at face-to-face universities. Second, the increasing requests for a synchronous platform. The delay in various activities due to physical distancing policies forced people to work and study remotely from home. This has led to a surge in the use of synchronous platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and others. Third, the development of asynchronous learning platforms called learning management system (LMS) was done by institutions, such as Moodle, D2L, Edmodo, Blackboard, canvas, and others.

LMS is software specifically designed to create, distribute, and manage educational content so that it can improve the learning process, and be more productive and cost-effective. Last, educators created resource sharing such as digital learning materials, MOOCs, and OER (MIT's Open Courseware, UKOU's OpenLearn, SUAKA UT). A study on the practice of online learning in higher education institutions in Indonesia shows that during the pandemic, 91.79% of respondents did online learning, while 7% did blended learning. Furthermore, the following table illustrates the use of LMS during the pandemic.

**Table 1.** Online Platforms

Learning Management System (LMS)	Percentage
Moodle	30.19%
Blackboard	1.81%
TalentMS	2.05%
Dacebo	0.48%
LMS365	11.71%
Unknown	22.46%
Others	31.28%

**Source:** Padmo, Ardiasih, & Idrus (2020)

The table shows the percentage of applying the LMS to conduct the online learning in which 30.19% of the respondents use Moodle LMS, while 11.71% apply LMS365 for their learning activities. Others stated that they use Blackboard, TalentMS, and Dacebo. From further explanation provided in the questionnaire, some respondents mentioned some other platforms they used during the pandemic situation, such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classrooms, WhatsApp Web, Eldiru (local), Schoology, and internal platforms developed by the institutions. On one hand, many organizations offer free online courses, making it easier for people to gain knowledge. On the other hand, other problems also arise related to infrastructure (internet/access point), equipment, broadband quality, lack of competence (technology literacy & online pedagogy), and financial problems.

The presence of DTUs is to open access and expand the capacity of conventional universities as well as to assist in overcoming conventional universities in terms of numbers that tend to be relatively exclusive, and not inclusive (Hall, 1996). Thus, it is expected that the presence of DTUs can “boost” the GER of higher education institutions in Indonesia which existing conventional universities cannot afford (Ministry of Education, 2019). Previously, the Indonesian government has issued various regulations and guidelines that encourage universities to implement distance and online learning, but not many universities took advantage of them. One of the programs is the Indonesia Online Learning System called SPADA. It is a program launched by the Directorate General of Learning and Student Affairs of the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education that aims to increase equitable access to quality learning in higher education. This program encourages the development and dissemination of open educational resources (OERs), massive open online courses (MOOCs), and open courses. Furthermore, the establishment of the Indonesia Higher Education and Research Network (INHERENT) in 2004 also played a significant role

as a network of universities from various provinces in Indonesia. There are more than 300 universities that are members of INHERENT and allow them to share online learning models that can be enrolled by all students in Indonesia.

## THE PRACTICE OF E-LEARNING AT UNIVERSITAS TERBUKA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES DURING AND POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Along with the rapid development of ICT and its use in learning as well as the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education's policies in increasing access and capacity of higher education services, universities that apply face-to-face mode are encouraged to offer e-learning or distance learning as a mode of learning. UT as an ODL institution with its experiences is mandated by the government to support the implementation of distance learning in other universities, including some responsibilities, such as (1) UT's contribution in accelerating the increase in higher education GER to reach 1 million students, (2) strengthening UT's identity as a Cyber University, and (3) providing supports to other universities and other institutions in implementing distance learning.

The Covid-19 pandemic that occurred in Indonesia in early March 2020 required UT to adapt and modify several learning services for students. These services include adaptation of the delivery of learning materials, student learning support services, and examinations. UT with a history of ODL has shown its readiness to overcome the Covid-19 issue because it has implemented the system for about 38 years. UT provides services to students who have various socio-economic backgrounds, domicile areas, cultures, and needs throughout Indonesia and in various parts of the world. This diversity is responded to by providing various modes of learning services that are accessible and in accordance with the needs of students. Thus, UT must optimize online services to students by taking advantage of advances in information technology. Several strategies carried out by UT during the pandemic were optimizing web-based learning support services for students, both asynchronously and synchronously. With the physical distancing policy launched by the Government, UT has taken a policy to switch from face-to-face services to online services. The policy is stated in UT Rector's Regulation Number 326 of 2020 concerning the Academic Policy of Universitas Terbuka in the Period of Preventing the Spread of Covid-19 in 2020. Therefore, to improve the quality of the students' independent learning process, UT provides learning supports services in the form of tutorials, consisting of online tutorials (tuton), face-to-face (f2f) tutorials, webinar tutorials (tuweb), radio tutorials, and TV tutorials.

Regarding the implementation of e-learning at UT, some adaptations and modifications were conducted in providing learning support services for students. A significant change is that face-to-face tutorials were not undergone for the first semester of 2020 since this mode of tutorial cannot be implemented during the pandemic and it has been changed to a synchronous online tutorial service, i.e. tuweb. The following table shows the comparison of the number of tutorial services provided before the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019 and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Table 2.** Tutorial Classes and Students Participating before and during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Types of Tutorial	Before Covid-19 2019		During Covid-19 2020	
	Number of Class/ courses	Number of students/courses	Number of Class/courses	Number of Students/courses
Face to face Tutorial	29,674	593,471	0	-
Webinar Tutorials (tuweb/synchronous)	21	192	26,573	476,703
Online Tutorials (tuton/ asynchronous)	12,580	596,010	12,991	605,237

**Source:** Center for Student Support Services of UT

The table shows that during Covid-19 pandemic the f2f tutorials were not conducted and the number of tuton classes as well as the number of students enrolled in the tuton classes increased significantly compared to those before the pandemic.

**Table 3.** Number of Tutors of the Faculties (2021-2022)

FACULTIES	TOTAL NUMBER OF TUTORS/INSTRUCTORS						NUMBER OF TUTORS/ INSTRUCTORS FROM PROFESSIONALS AND INDUSTRIES					
	TUWEB		TUTON		PRACTICE/ PRACTICUM		TUWEB		TUTON		PRACTICE/ PRACTICUM	
	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1	2021 smt 2	2022 smt 1
Faculty of Education and Teacher Training (FKIP)	5.561	5.540	1.650	1.724	3.629	3.411	2.245	2.351	358	478	1.404	1.398
Faculty of Science and Technology (FST)	100	98	451	605	153	148	52	56	179	251	67	76
Faculty of Law, Social and Political Science (FHSIP)	1.473	1.433	2.221	2.416	88	77	658	655	1.391	1.448	35	35
Faculty of Economics (FE)	1.120	1.085	1.638	1.729	46	17	604	603	1.040	1.087	23	8
<b>Total</b>	8.254	8.156	5.960	6.474	3.916	3.653	3.559 (43%)	3.665	2.968 (50%)	3.264	1.529	1.517
Postgraduate Programs			432	386					70 (16%)	61 (16%)		

**Source:** Universitas Terbuka (2022)

Based on the table, it is visible that there was a fluctuation in the number of tutors/instructors from the second semester of 2021 (July-December) and the first semester of 2022 (January-June). Furthermore, due to the absence of f2f tutorials, UT optimized the recruitment of tutors/instructors from professionals and industries, reaching 50% for undergraduate programs and 16% for postgraduates. This is in line with UT's support of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology programs called "Freedom Learning Freedom Campus" in which one of the aims is to involve professionals or industries in order for the learners to gain some knowledge and experiences directly from them.

The e-learning or online learning mode has been applied to almost all aspects of educational services, from registration to graduation. In terms of academic products, students can take advantage of digital teaching materials as well as interactive digital teaching materials besides printed teaching materials. In 2002 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) introduced the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) to support online teaching and learning. OERs are any educational resources or learning, teaching, and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under the copyright that has been released under an open license, that permits no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation, and redistribution by others (Butcher, Kanwar, & Uvalic-Trumbic, 2011; UNESCO, 2019). Therefore, there are advantages to using OER, i.e. 1) no need to pay royalties or license fees during the process of teaching and learning, and 2) both educators and learners are more productive. The use of OER has taken important parts in education, particularly in e-learning.

Since OER is highly recommended due to its flexibility and accessibility to support the teaching and learning process, UT as a DTU has applied the use of OERs since 2010. The OERs called Sumber Pembelajaran Terbuka (SUAKA) UT accessed by UT students as well as public provided by UT to support the students' learning activities are in the forms of web supplements, virtual reading room and online journals available in

the digital library, UT radio, UT-TV, “Guru Pintar Online” Portal (Portal for teachers), online journals, and MOOCS, as shown in the following table.

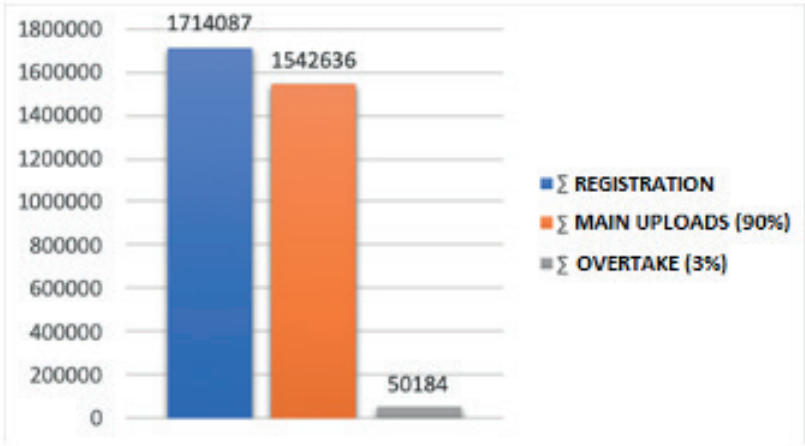
**Table 4.** Access to UT Open Educational Resources (SUAKA UT)

Kinds of UT Open Learning Sources	2019	2020	2021	2022 Semester 1
UT Radio	55,933	41,335	36,275	20,696
Web Supplements (Open Courseware)	133,504	99,422	73,612	43,206
“Guru Pintar online” Portal	109,680	3,833,294	2,060,333	1,238,039
Digital Library dan UT-TV	4,030,013	8,742,024	9,557,385	5,043,813
Online Journals	294,264	415,552	551,338	282,870
MOOCs	59,228			95,368
<b>Jumlah</b>	<b>4,623,611</b>	<b>13,131,647</b>	<b>12,278,943</b>	<b>6,723,992</b>

Source: Universitas Terbuka (2022)

The table shows that since the pandemic, access to SUAKA UT has increased dramatically. UT provided open access to the main learning materials through the virtual reading room that can be accessed in UT digital library, not only for UT students but also for the public. In 2019, the access to SUAKA UT, especially the digital library and UT-TV reached 4,030,013 and during the pandemic, it increased every year, i.e. 6,723,992 in June 2022 and predicted to be more than 13 million access. Furthermore, the functions of UT-TV are not limited to sharing learning materials but also broadcasting some webinars conducted by UT from the level of study programs to the university. One of the UT webinar series conducted since 2020 by inviting some experts in ODL as well as educational technology from academicians and government officials is called the knowledge sharing forum (KSF) reached 26 series in August 2022.

To measure students’ competency achievement, there are various types of exams provided by UT, such as paper-based exams, online exams, and online proctoring exams. However, during the pandemic, the needs of online exams increased dramatically since all the paper-based exams were cancelled due to the pandemic situation. Therefore, in the early pandemic students were provided the course assignments to be accessed online as the parts of student evaluation both online tutorial participants and those who learn without being enrolled in online tutorials. In 2021, UT optimized the student exams by providing take home examinations or THE that can be accessed at <https://the.ut.ac.id>. The THEs are provided in the form of essay writing and opened book that students have to follow some regulations regarding their integrity, such as avoiding plagiarism. The following is the results of THE in 2021 semester 1 (June 2021).



**Figure 3.** THE Uploads of the First Semester taken in June 2021

Source: Universitas Terbuka (2022)



It was predicted that tertiary education systems can emerge stronger from the Covid-19 crisis in Asia (Yarrow, 2020). Consequently, governments and institutions need to consider some aspects to build new innovations and possibilities for the recovery from the crisis. All educational institutions are getting their campuses and procedures ready for a “new normal” to welcome staff and students back. However, it seems that online learning will still take place in the new normal era. Therefore, educational institutions need to develop and diversify infrastructure, increase collaboration, and provide flexible learning pathways. Educational institutions must create a more agile and flexible system for digital pedagogy and develop low-tech innovations to give learning opportunities to students who are disadvantaged.

The development of UT as a cyber university aims to make UT strengthen its service network to assist agencies and institutions (colleges, ministries, official universities) that will organize information technology-based programs, as an effort to accelerate the increase in the GER of higher education and to meet various educational needs of the community, both degree and non-degree programs. As the pioneer of DE in Indonesia, UT is one of the most visited state universities in Indonesia, both from within and outside the country to conduct comparative studies on distance learning as well as e-learning. The trust of other universities in the quality of the ODL implemented by UT is also increasing with the number of other university students participating in the Loose Courses offered by UT. Furthermore, UT was also appointed as the Chair of the Consortium for the development of the Indonesian Cyber Education Institute (ICE Institute) together with 14 leading universities in Indonesia, including the University of Indonesia, Institute of Technology Bandung, IPB University, Gajah Mada University, Institute of Technology Surabaya, Binus University, Diponegoro University, and any others. ICE Institute is an online learning marketplace that offers more than 350 choices of courses in an effort to disseminate knowledge (ICE Institute, 2022). ICE Institute also collaborates with service providers Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) such as EDX to provide opportunities for students and lecturers to take part in online learning in this leading marketplace.

Regarding the role of UT as a DTU, UT need to provide some supports to many universities in Indonesia that do not have adequate infrastructure and human resources for online learning. For this reason, UT is committed to actively providing solutions to help other universities in Indonesia in implementing DE. Among other things, this commitment is embodied through some ways. First, by provide an online learning service platform or Learning Management System (LMS) which is intended for state or private higher education institutions in Indonesia based on their needs. LMS is a software application used by educational institutions to manage online learning classes. With this technology, distance is no longer an obstacle in the implementation of education. The LMS used by UT is Moodle. Moreover, UT also provides assistance through training on the use of Moodle and the provision of a data management center for those institutions which want to use it in online learning but are constrained by infrastructure problems. Second, providing open free access and use of more than 1,300 digital teaching materials in the UT Virtual Reading Room (RBV) for students and lecturers from various other universities in the country. This digital BA can be accessed from various places via an internet connection using a laptop, computer, tablet, or smartphone. Third, by regularly organizing online scientific communication forums (webinars) aimed at disseminating knowledge about the implementation of distance education in Indonesia and the world. On a national scale, UT organizes a Knowledge Sharing Forum (KSF) and on an international scale UT collaborates with several experts and institutions from abroad to organize the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) Webinar. This forum aims to explore ideas and best practices of the distance education system in international world. Consequently, in this uncertain era of the COVID-19 pandemic, UT has also shown empathy and concern by providing relaxation of Single Tuition Fees for students affected by the pandemic, including various kinds of educational scholarships. Up to 2022, the tuition assistance provided by UT reaches around 16 billion Rupiah.

## CONCLUSION

UT in the Era of Adapting to New Habits has strengthened its identity as the leader of Distance Teaching Universities in Indonesia because of UT’s 38-year experiences in implementing a distance learning system by utilizing advances in information technology. During the Covid-19 pandemic, UT has succeeded in carrying out various innovations in the academic and operational fields. Technology-based distance learning is proven

to be able to expand access to quality higher education. The Covid-19 pandemic is also a challenge as well as an opportunity for UT to continue to provide optimal distance education services to students while maintaining the quality of its services. The increasing trend of UT students in 2021 and 2022 indicates UT's success in carrying out the transformation to respond to the disruption caused by the pandemic.

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