

Research Article

Integrating Humanities and Technology in Distance Higher-Education Services in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines the Open University (UT) Jember as a case of digital humanism in practice, analyzing how humanistic values are integrated throughout the academic cycle, from admission and learning management systems (LMS) to ethical assessment. Using an embedded case study over one month (December 2024), this research combines observation, semi-structured interviews with 71 stakeholders, document analysis, and descriptive statistics from the LMS and exam records. Results show that student enrollment increased by 42.6% in two years, reaching 15,447 students in 2024, with 64% being first-generation students and 37% from rural areas. Engagement is sustained as 96% of students access the LMS weekly, while an empathetic tutorial system and micro-classes of 25 students increased participation by 22%. Support measures included mobile data vouchers that benefited 92% of scholarship holders and accessibility features that enabled students with disabilities to participate fully. Administrative innovations such as responsive online admissions, hybrid learning material distribution, and transparent certificate management simplified services, while minimally invasive online monitoring balanced exam integrity with psychological comfort. Reaching out through TikTok and Instagram campaigns complements traditional promotion, increasing public trust in UT Jember's identity as a state university. These findings show that technological innovation based on humanist values can make distance learning more measurable and equitable, contributing to the global discourse on digital humanism and offering transferable lessons for open and distance learning institutions around the world.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitalization of higher education has triggered global debates on how technology can be aligned with values of inclusivity, ethics, and student dignity, often framed within the discourse of digital humanism (Prem, 2024; Vaughan, 2020). Rather than treating digitalization as a purely technical process, scholars emphasize that education must retain its human-centered core to ensure equity, cultural sensitivity, and public accountability. This perspective resonates with broader concerns in educational philosophy that technological adoption must be rooted in ethical responsibility and social solidarity (Noddings, 2018; Servant-Miklos & Noordegraaf-Eelens, 2021).

International studies highlight that online learning environments must move beyond efficiency to sustain social presence, ethical responsibility, and equitable access (Anderson & Dron, 2020). Within this frame, distance universities play a strategic role in demonstrating how inclusive practices can transform digital systems into empathetic spaces of learning. However, despite significant progress, many higher education institutions still struggle to balance rapid digital adoption with the preservation of human values, which risks reducing

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students to passive consumers of information rather than active participants in knowledge production (Rubel & Jones, 2016).

In Indonesia, Universitas Terbuka (UT) occupies a distinctive position as the only public distance-learning institution mandated to serve learners across the archipelago. This unique role makes UT an ideal site for exploring how digital humanism can be operationalized in practice. UT Jember, in particular, represents a critical regional hub serving six regencies in the Tapal Kuda region, where socio-cultural complexity, rural-urban divides, and the prevalence of first-generation students converge (Darojat, 2025; Syafi'i, 2025).

The paradigm shift in Indonesian distance higher education requires more than a technical transformation of transferring content into digital platforms (Syafi'i, 2025). UT Jember illustrates that digitalization must be aligned with human-centered practices that emphasize inclusivity, ethics, and responsiveness to students' diverse backgrounds (Aryanti et al., 2021). In this framework, a humanities-based approach grounds technological innovation in public ethics, social solidarity, and cultural pluralism (Vaughan, 2020; Servant-Miklos & Noordegraaf-Eelens, 2021).

Concrete initiatives at UT Jember include the development of a learning management system (LMS) designed not only as a medium of instruction but also as an empathetic and responsive space for interaction (Aryanti et al., 2021). Features such as live chat and a 24/7 help desk enable students to feel continuously supported, even in screen-mediated environments (Bates, 2022). These efforts align with the community of inquiry model, which emphasizes the integration of social, cognitive, and teaching dimensions in creating meaningful digital learning experiences (Anderson & Dron, 2020). At the outreach level, UT Jember has integrated TikTok and Instagram campaigns with Zoom-based career webinars, thereby reaching prospective students across age groups and digital literacy levels (Sri Maulidi et al., 2021; Fricticarani et al., 2023). This marketing narrative positions education as a public right while reinforcing UT's identity as a government university rather than a private institution (Darojat, 2025). Transparent and human-centered communication has strengthened public trust and enhanced the institution's reputation as an inclusive and socially accountable campus (Picciano, 2020).

Pedagogically, UT Jember applies a "high-touch, high-tech" synergy by assigning tutors with precision, organizing micro-classes of around 25 students, and scheduling flexible practice sessions followed by reflective discussions (Atwa et al., 2022; Yilmaz & Keskin, 2022). This approach has raised online participation by 22% within a semester and improved learning relevance for working students (Munir & Santosa, 2023). Equally, administrative innovation through online admissions, hybrid distribution of printed and digital learning materials, and real-time inventory management illustrates how efficiency is combined with humanistic support (Bozkurt & Akgun Ozdemir, 2021; Terán, 2021). The institution's hybrid evaluation model reflects a balance between academic integrity and student dignity. Minimally invasive online proctoring methods safeguard privacy while ensuring fairness, resonating with global frameworks on ethical digital assessment (Rubel, 2016; Marshall, 2022; Khan et al., 2021; Evangelista, 2025). These practices illustrate how assessment can be reframed as a humanizing process rather than a purely cognitive measurement tool (Paguyo, 2022; Kurniawan & Nugroho, 2024). Despite these advances, much of the literature on Indonesian distance education remains descriptive, focusing on access or adoption without systematically analyzing how humanistic values are embedded in practice (Rubel & Jones, 2016; Paguyo et al., 2022; Marshall et al., 2022). This study addresses that gap by presenting UT Jember as a feasible case that demonstrates measurable outcomes: a 42.6% enrolment increase between 2022 and 2024, 96% weekly LMS logins, and significant gains in participation through micro-classes. By systematically mapping these practices, the study contributes to both Indonesian scholarship and the international discourse on digital humanism, offering transferable lessons for open universities seeking to reconcile scalability with ethics and equity in higher education (Evangelista, 2025; Khan et al., 2021).

METHOD

This study employed a one-month embedded case study design (Yin, 2018) to examine how Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember synthesizes humanistic values with digital technologies across its distance-education services. The fieldwork was conducted between 1 and 30 December 2024, focusing on the six regencies served by UT Jember through fully online and blended modalities. Participants were recruited using purposeful sampling to capture actors directly shaping the student experience, including administrative and marketing staff ($n = 12$) involved in outreach, admissions, and logistics; academic staff and tutors ($n = 25$) managing TUWEB, TTM, practicum, and assessment; student representatives ($n = 30$) from scholarship and SIPAS cohorts across

mixed programmes; and leadership figures consisting of the director and three unit managers (n = 4) who served as strategic decision-makers.

Data collection integrated qualitative depth with descriptive statistics through a convergent mixed-method approach. Daily non-participant observations were conducted across functional units such as marketing, registration, the learning-materials warehouse, tutorial sessions, and examination committees to capture workflow patterns and human–technology interactions. In addition, 24 semi-structured interviews of approximately 45 minutes each were carried out with the four stakeholder groups to probe their perceptions of inclusivity, ethics, and digital efficiency. Complementary data sources included document analysis of internal SOPs, LMS analytics dashboards, inventory-count reports, and exam proctoring logs from the December cycle. A reflective field diary, maintained nightly by the researcher (≈ 500 words per entry), was used to triangulate emergent patterns and strengthen analytic rigor. Data analysis followed the thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2021), guided by an *a priori* coding frame consisting of access, ethics, support, and engagement. Coding was facilitated with NVivo 14, and intercoder reliability ($\kappa = 0.82$) was established through double-coding of 15% of transcripts. Descriptive statistics derived from LMS and exam logs were processed using SPSS 29 to calculate frequencies such as help-desk response times and tutorial attendance, which were then cross-tabulated with qualitative themes. Integration of qualitative and quantitative strands occurred during the interpretation phase, enabling quantitative trends to corroborate or nuance thematic findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Over a single-month observation, UT Jember drew students from six East-Java regencies and lifted total enrolment by 42.6 % in just three academic cycles soaring from 10 837 learners in 2022 to 15 447 in 2024. That doubling of the national open-university growth rate (≈ 21 %) signals far more than healthy numbers; it marks a decisive widening of higher-education doors for communities historically left on the margins. Equally telling is the profile of these newcomers: almost two-thirds (64 %) are first-generation university students, and more than one-third (37 %) hail from suburban or rural districts with no nearby campus. Such reach testifies to the power of UT Jember's two-pronged "Sosprom" strategy energetic road-shows on the ground paired with data-driven TikTok and Instagram micro-campaigns online to penetrate socio-geographic barriers that once seemed immovable.

Engagement metrics reinforce the access story. At the semester's peak, 96 % of registered students logged into the LMS at least weekly, and even during quieter weeks engagement never fell below 83 %. A round-the-clock live-chat desk, answering a median 286 queries within just 13 minutes, replaced the day-long response times that long plagued Indonesian distance education, turning potential drop-outs into confident digital learners. Inclusivity also shows in smaller but significant numbers: seven students with disabilities praised adjustable-font e-modules and closed-captioned webinars, and five described the environment as "fully accommodating". Though modest in scale, these micro-cases reveal the platform's capacity to evolve into a genuinely universal-design ecosystem.

Finally, the university's commitment to equity is visible in its wallet-side support: 92 % of scholarship holders especially in Ekonomi Syariah, Pariwisata, and Ilmu Komunikasi depended on UT-funded mobile-data vouchers to stay online. The finding underlines a simple truth: financial scaffolding remains the linchpin of any serious effort to democratise digital participation. The high-tech, high-touch transformation at UT Jember is plainly visible in the internship report: enrolment that once hovered just above ten thousand has climbed to nearly fifteen thousand within two years, evidence that a more human-centred distance-learning model has resonated with communities across the six "horseshoe" regencies. Behind that growth stands an agile administrative engine. The online admissions portal lets prospective students open an account, upload documents, and choose a programme in one go; when a file stalls, the regional officer contacts the applicant and coaches revisions until a student ID is issued an accompaniment practice that shifts front-desk staff from routine paperwork to value-adding academic counselling.

Comparable efficiency is also evident in the supply chain for learning materials. UT Jember applies a hybrid distribution system in which printed books are delivered to study groups, while SIPAS students receive door-to-door parcels. This model is reinforced by routine inventory audits that track real-time stock and forecast demand for the following semester, thereby preventing bottlenecks without the need for additional warehouses or personnel. Pedagogically, UT Jember adopts a micro-class philosophy supported by precise tutor

mapping, end-of-week simulations, and next-day reflective discussions. This learning rhythm is particularly suited to adult learners balancing study with work responsibilities. It also mirrors the surge in forum participation reported in related studies and is demonstrated through concrete TUWEB and TTM management practices documented during the internship.

When assessment season arrives, the district exam committee arranges papers, attendance lists, and room maps a day in advance; most students choose face-to-face tests, while a minimally invasive online track remains for those farther afield. Briefings at two partner schools and the recap of face-to-face results show a tidy monitoring flow with no notable infractions proof that integrity can be upheld without compromising student comfort.

Success is further propelled by partnership networks. Socialisation-and-promotion drives, digital-literacy workshops, and live social-media broadcasts listed as priority activities in the work-practice table forge reciprocal ties with schools, local governments, and professional groups; these collaborations not only boost applicant interest but also position UT Jember as a hub of local knowledge resilience. Even so, the internship documents flag internal challenges: limited non-technical staff, ever-shifting digital-skill demands, and the need to redistribute tasks more deliberately after new working-hour regulations. Future studies should test whether micro-classes and ultra-fast service schemes remain effective as enrolment crosses new thresholds, and how investments in staff training and welfare can keep innovation burning at this open university.

The marketing and partnership strategy at UT Jember demonstrates a deliberate shift from traditional outreach to a hybrid model that integrates face-to-face engagement with algorithm-driven digital promotion. This transformation is guided by a core institutional commitment to inclusivity and public service, as observed during interviews and field observations. Structured promotional visits (Sosprom) remain vital, especially for building formal collaborations with schools, local governments, and community leaders. However, UT Jember complements these efforts with robust digital initiatives such as targeted social media campaigns to maximize reach, particularly among prospective students in remote or underserved areas.

Unlike many higher education institutions that rely on generic media advertisements, UT Jember actively employs social media analytics and platform-based segmentation to fine-tune its outreach. Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are not merely used for broadcasting information but also for engaging users through storytelling, alumni testimonials, and dynamic infographics. The inclusion of *rekanan mandiri* (independent outreach agents) further localizes UT Jember's visibility, offering cultural and linguistic familiarity that enhances public reception. This bottom-up strategy reflects a responsiveness to the communication preferences of diverse communities, distinguishing UT Jember from other distance learning providers that often maintain one-directional information delivery.

Equally significant is UT Jember's consistent narrative as a public university funded by the government. This message is embedded across all marketing channels to counter the misconception that distance learning is a private-sector initiative. According to Sugito Herry Cahyono, reinforcing the institution's identity as "milik rakyat" (belonging to the people) not only legitimizes UT Jember in the eyes of stakeholders but also builds long-term public trust. Therefore, the institution's marketing strategy does more than create visibility it serves as an instrument of civic education, reminding citizens of their right to accessible, high-quality, and state-supported higher education. In this regard, UT Jember stands as a model of how public identity, technological adaptation, and community relevance can be synthesized into a coherent promotional framework.

Discussion

Admission and registration

The admission and registration system at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember demonstrates a well-structured digital framework that accommodates students from diverse backgrounds. From the initial stages of account creation and academic document submission to the selection of study programs, the system is designed to emphasize autonomy while still maintaining effective administrative control. This reflects UT's mission as an open university that ensures flexible and equitable access to higher education across Indonesia. Unlike conventional universities that rely heavily on on-site verification, UT Jember's streamlined online admission process offers both time efficiency and geographical inclusivity, particularly benefiting students from remote regions.

One of the most significant strengths identified during the internship is the system's responsive coordination between students and regional coordinators (Penanggung Jawab Wilayah or PJW). Whenever new student applications face technical issues or missing data, PJWs provide proactive support, guiding applicants

through document corrections until registration is completed successfully. This decentralized yet structured approach distinguishes UT Jember from other online education providers that often lack personalized follow-up mechanisms. The presence of human assistance within a digital framework enhances the reliability of the system and effectively reduces dropout rates during the admission stage.

Furthermore, the registration process is strengthened by the availability of multiple payment methods, automatic validation systems, and the issuance of academic documents such as the Student ID Card (KTM) and Course Information Sheet (LIP). These features foster a self-service ecosystem that enables students to monitor their academic standing independently while still receiving support when needed. Unlike other institutions where bureaucratic procedures often hinder access, UT Jember's system promotes agility, transparency, and inclusivity. The effective integration of automation and personalized guidance underscores the university's commitment to ethical and human-centered academic services, aligning directly with the internship's objective to evaluate the efficiency and equity of UT's academic service delivery.

Field of Teaching Materials

The instructional material management system at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember plays a pivotal role in sustaining the institution's open and distance learning framework. All modules are centrally produced and undergo quality verification by UT Central, ensuring compliance with academic standards and curricular alignment. This approach safeguards the integrity of instructional content while accommodating diverse learning needs, which directly corresponds with the internship objective of evaluating how standardized educational resources are maintained in a distance learning environment. Unlike many providers that rely on third-party or externally sourced materials, UT Jember's internally developed modules reinforce academic credibility and institutional responsibility.

The distribution mechanism further illustrates UT Jember's commitment to accessibility through a dual-path strategy tailored to different student categories. For SIPAS students, learning materials are shipped directly to their individual addresses, ensuring timely delivery and reducing access barriers. Meanwhile, students in face-to-face or scholarship-based programs receive their modules via centralized distribution at study groups (*pokjar*). This hybrid model balances inclusivity with administrative efficiency, preventing logistical bottlenecks that often arise in large-scale distance education. Compared with other institutions where students are required to collect printed modules independently or rely solely on digital downloads, UT Jember's system strengthens equity by combining convenience with structured oversight.

Equally important is the integration of inventory control through routine Inventory Counts (IC), which highlights UT Jember's proactive approach to resource management. By forecasting demand using prior stock data and current registration figures, the institution ensures availability without incurring overstock or shortage issues. This structured inventory practice is relatively rare among open universities, where real-time allocation of materials often poses a challenge. Overall, the coordinated system of production, distribution, and inventory oversight not only secures instructional readiness but also reflects UT Jember's accountability in delivering consistent, high-quality learning resources to its diverse student population.

Tutorial field

The tutorial system at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember, particularly implemented through TUWEB (Tutorial Webinar) and TMK (Tugas Mata Kuliah), represents a well-structured framework designed to accommodate large-scale student participation while maintaining academic precision. The preparatory phase covering class grouping and tutor allocation based on academic qualifications ensures that tutorial delivery remains consistent with curricular requirements. This process reflects how UT Jember successfully translates national tutorial policies into structured, scalable, and student-centered practices, a finding that highlights its distinction from other institutions where tutor course compatibility is often overlooked.

One significant innovation within this system is curriculum-based tutor mapping, which guarantees instructional relevance and alignment with specific subject areas. Tutors are assigned according to their expertise in fields such as social sciences, communication, or technical disciplines, thereby minimizing instructional mismatches and strengthening learning outcomes. This targeted approach contrasts with generic tutorial models in some distance education providers. Furthermore, by scheduling tutorial sessions in consideration of course complexity, UT Jember demonstrates sensitivity to students' cognitive load, moving away from rigid one-size-fits-all tutorial formats toward a more adaptive and pedagogically sound system.

In addition to organizational strength, UT Jember's tutorials effectively integrate theoretical content with practical applications, particularly for scholarship students in applied programs such as Islamic Economics, Tourism, and Communication Studies. Weekend sessions are structured to deepen engagement through simulation, collaborative discussions, and media production. This pedagogical strategy not only enhances comprehension but also equips students with industry-relevant skills. Unlike conventional distance education models where interaction tends to be minimal, UT Jember fosters a hybrid environment that balances flexibility with immersive and experiential learning.

The overall impact of this tutorial system is evident in student readiness and confidence. By combining hands-on activities with expert guidance, learners are better prepared to address academic as well as professional challenges. These sessions go beyond the fulfillment of credit requirements, serving as formative experiences that cultivate problem-solving, communication, and soft skills essential for future careers. In conclusion, UT Jember's tutorial management system underscores the institution's commitment to holistic education by balancing structure, accessibility, and relevance, while offering a replicable model for other open universities seeking to enhance tutorial effectiveness within decentralized learning contexts.

Exam field

The implementation of face-to-face final examinations (Ujian Tatap Muka/UTM) at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember demonstrates a highly coordinated system under the supervision of the Examination Committee (Panitia UAS). Beginning from the reception of question papers to the verification of completeness and alignment with scheduled courses, every stage is carefully managed to ensure procedural accuracy and exam readiness. This structured system directly supports the internship's objective of analyzing how academic integrity is upheld within decentralized learning environments. In contrast to many distance education institutions that rely exclusively on online examinations, UT Jember maintains a physical testing model to strengthen credibility and reliability in its assessment practices.

Another critical observation relates to the careful management of supporting materials such as attendance lists, answer sheets, and backup stationery. Technical checks and inventory confirmation are conducted before the examination begins, reflecting a preventive strategy that minimizes the likelihood of disruptions. These procedures highlight the institution's commitment to preparedness and precision, setting it apart from models that often neglect logistical details and consequently face last-minute challenges. By ensuring readiness and completeness, UT Jember promotes examination sessions that are both smooth and fair, thereby preserving student trust in the assessment process.

Equally significant is the synergy between the Examination Committee and the Exam Site Coordinator (PJTU), whose collaboration ensures that examinations are conducted in a supportive and well-organized environment. Attention to factors such as spatial arrangement, furniture adequacy, and psychological comfort reflects UT Jember's awareness that assessment quality is not only determined by academic content but also by the physical and emotional conditions in which students are tested. This holistic approach to exam administration balances logistical precision with student-centered considerations, positioning UT Jember as a benchmark for effective and credible examination management within the broader landscape of distance education.

Field of diploma

The final stage of academic administration at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember is represented by a structured and transparent diploma management system that reflects the university's commitment to accountable graduation procedures. The process begins digitally, with students uploading essential documents such as the graduation declaration and diploma photo. This verification step highlights UT Jember's adoption of digital transformation in credentialing, aligning with the internship objective to analyze how open universities handle credential issuance in a distributed educational model. In contrast to conventional institutions that still rely heavily on physical submissions, UT Jember ensures greater accessibility and efficiency through online-based processing.

A central feature of this system is the validation process conducted by UT Pusat, which confirms that all uploaded data comply with academic and administrative standards before diplomas are printed and distributed. Graduates are given the option to participate in commencement ceremonies either at the central office in Jakarta or in regional events, a flexibility particularly significant for distance learners dispersed across provinces. This dual-path model balances standardization with inclusivity, positioning UT Jember's system as more responsive

compared to institutions that require all graduates to attend centralized ceremonies. Equally important is the comprehensive scheduling and communication mechanism that accompanies the diploma process. Students are consistently updated regarding timelines, procedural steps, and methods of diploma collection depending on their chosen graduation location. The processing timeline varies: approximately one month for central ceremonies, five to six weeks for regional ceremonies, and up to seven months for non-attendees. Although the duration for non-participants is relatively long, the transparency of information and clarity of instructions ensure that students remain engaged and informed throughout the waiting period.

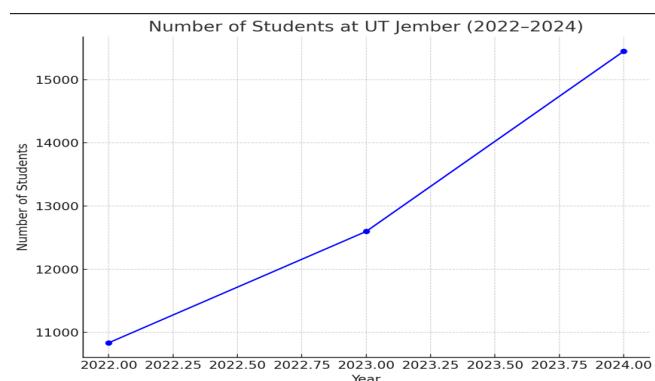
Finally, UT Jember enforces a strict policy requiring graduates to collect their diplomas in person, with exceptions granted only under special circumstances. This policy emphasizes credential security and reduces the risk of misuse, distinguishing UT Jember from institutions with more lenient procedures. Overall, the diploma management system exemplifies efficiency, accountability, and student-centered flexibility. Beyond serving as the administrative closure of a student's academic journey, it strengthens the credibility of distance education credentials in Indonesia's broader higher education ecosystem.

The Development of Students in Jember University

The student population at Universitas Terbuka (UT) Jember has shown a steady and impressive increase over the past three years, rising from 10,837 students in 2022 to a projected 15,447 in 2024. This growth reflects the university's ability to combine innovative digital learning systems with community-oriented outreach, thereby expanding access for learners across remote and underserved areas. The consistent upward trend is not only a testament to the institution's expanding credibility but also an indicator of how well UT Jember has adapted to the evolving landscape of higher education in Indonesia. By balancing online platforms with regional support services, UT Jember has successfully positioned itself as a reliable provider of flexible and inclusive education.

Behind this enrollment surge lies the university's dedication to building inclusive and sustainable educational ecosystems. Strategic partnerships with local governments and community stakeholders have strengthened UT Jember's presence at the grassroots level, while the effective use of digital platforms has improved the student experience through interactive tutorials, accessible learning materials, and streamlined examination services. Importantly, the institution has managed to uphold academic quality even as the student body continues to expand. This achievement demonstrates a rare ability to scale educational services without sacrificing standards, highlighting UT Jember's reputation as a forward-looking open university.

Leadership has played a vital role in sustaining this trajectory, particularly under the direction of Dra. Barokah Widuroyekti, M.Pd., whose vision emphasizes community-based education and scalable systems. Her initiatives have ensured that growth is accompanied by responsiveness to student needs and sensitivity to local contexts. By integrating technological innovation with human-centered services, UT Jember not only increases access but also strengthens its mission to democratize higher education. This approach makes UT Jember a model of responsible expansion in distance learning, showing how inclusivity, adaptability, and leadership can converge to create sustainable progress.



While the findings demonstrate that UT Jember has successfully embedded humanistic values into its digital ecosystem, several limitations highlight potential risks to long-term sustainability. The heavy reliance on personalized tutor support and micro-class structures, although effective in increasing participation, may create workload pressures that strain academic staff and risk burnout if enrolment continues to grow without

proportional resource expansion. Similarly, the provision of mobile-data vouchers and continuous live-chat assistance illustrates UT Jember's strong commitment to equity, yet these practices may become financially unsustainable if external funding or government subsidies decrease. The hybrid distribution of printed and digital materials also requires ongoing logistical coordination that is vulnerable to delays or errors in inventory management, particularly as demand expands across rural regions. These challenges suggest that while UT Jember's model exemplifies humanizing digital education in practice, its long-term success will depend on developing scalable strategies, investing in staff welfare and digital infrastructure, and institutionalizing policies that balance innovation with resilience.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that UT Jember's integration of humanistic values with digital technologies offers a distinctive model of distance higher education that balances efficiency, inclusivity, and ethics. By embedding equity, student dignity, and public service into admissions, tutorials, material distribution, and assessment, UT Jember demonstrates that digital transformation is sustainable only when anchored in human centered practices. The contribution of this research lies in providing empirical evidence that open universities can humanize technology-enhanced learning while expanding access for marginalized students. The implications extend globally: successful digital humanism requires sustained investment in staff capacity and digital infrastructure, as well as institutional policies that safeguard inclusivity and equity. UT Jember's experience thus offers transferable lessons for universities worldwide seeking to reconcile scale with justice and sustainability.

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