

# DISSEMINATION PATTERNS OF INNOVATION IN INDONESIAN OPEN AND DISTANCE HIGHER EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND STRATEGIES

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the dissemination patterns of the MyUT application innovation at Universitas Terbuka (UT), with a particular focus on the communication channels and strategies employed to reach students within the context of open and distance higher education (ODHE). Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, documentation, and observations involving UT staff and students from various regions. The findings reveal that the dissemination process of MyUT follows Rogers' diffusion of innovations stages—from knowledge to confirmation—with the success of adoption strongly influenced by a combination of digital and interpersonal communication channels. Effective communication strategies were identified as multimodal and contextual approaches, involving tutors, regional staff, and student communities as change agents. Key challenges in the dissemination process include limited digital infrastructure, varying levels of technological literacy, and disparities in information access across regions. Students perceived MyUT as compatible with their needs but highlighted the necessity for more visual, interactive, and participatory communication approaches. This study underscores the importance of dialogic innovation communication that is adaptive to local contexts and reinforces community engagement in the adoption of educational technologies. The findings offer theoretical implications for innovation diffusion models in ODHE settings and practical recommendations for developing more effective and inclusive institutional digital communication strategies.

**Keywords:** diffusion of innovation, Open and Distance Higher Education, MyUT application, communication strategy, distance education

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Open and distance higher education (ODHE) in Indonesia has experienced rapid growth alongside advances in information technology. Universitas Terbuka (UT), as the pioneer of ODHE in the country, serves a student population spread across the archipelago, numbering in the hundreds of thousands (aaou.org, 2020; Darojat et al., 2023). As a trailblazer, UT is expected to take a leading role in innovating ODHE delivery in Indonesia. Technological innovation is crucial to enhancing the quality of both academic and administrative services in a geographically dispersed learning environment. UT has implemented a range of digital

initiatives, including online registration systems, the provision of digital learning materials, online tutorials, and proctored online examinations (Darojat et al., 2023). These efforts align with UT's mission to leverage technology in expanding access to and improving the quality of distance higher education.

One of the strategic digital innovations at Universitas Terbuka (UT) is the MyUT application. MyUT is an integrated platform designed to bring various academic services closer to UT students through an online system. Through MyUT, students can register for courses, pay tuition fees, complete their study plans (KRS), check exam results, monitor academic progress, and access the digital library—all within a single sign-on application. This innovation allows UT students to independently obtain academic information and services anytime and anywhere, thereby enhancing the flexibility and efficiency of their distance learning experience (Kompas.tv, 2023). Such innovation is crucial in supporting academic services in open and distance higher education (ODHE), as it helps bridge the gap of time and space between the institution and its students.

However, the main challenge does not lie solely in the development of technological innovations, but rather in how these innovations are effectively disseminated to the entire academic community. The distance education environment (PTJJ) presents unique characteristics, including a geographically dispersed student and stakeholder population, limited face-to-face interaction, and a high degree of cultural diversity and technological access that must be considered. These conditions demand a flexible and sustainable innovation communication strategy to ensure optimal adoption. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of combining digital and interpersonal communication channels to enhance understanding and acceptance of innovations in distance education contexts. This implies that innovation dissemination in PTJJ should not rely solely on a single communication channel, such as online portals or email, but should also incorporate interpersonal communication—through tutors, support staff, and student communities—to ensure that information is effectively delivered and comprehended (Gunawardena et al., 2010).

Innovation communication is classically defined as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. This definition was proposed by Everett M. Rogers in his theory of diffusion of innovations, which serves as a primary reference in studies of new technology dissemination. Rogers

(2003) outlines that the diffusion of innovation involves five stages in the innovation-decision process: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. In the knowledge stage, individuals or groups become aware of the existence of an innovation and gain an initial understanding of it. Next, during the persuasion stage, they form a positive or negative attitude toward the innovation based on the information they receive. The decision stage is when individuals choose to adopt or reject the innovation. If adopted, the innovation moves to the implementation stage, in which it begins to be used in practice. Finally, the confirmation stage occurs when individuals seek reinforcement for their adoption decision and affirm its appropriateness—or, conversely, revise their decision if they encounter negative information at this point.

Rogers (2003) outlines four key elements that influence the diffusion process: the characteristics of the innovation itself, the communication channels used, the time span of diffusion, and the social system in which the diffusion occurs. The characteristics of innovation affect how quickly and widely it is adopted, including aspects such as relative advantage, compatibility with existing needs, complexity of use, trialability, and observability. Communication channels refer to the mediums or methods through which information about the innovation is conveyed, generally categorized into mass media channels and interpersonal channels (Sahin, 2006). Rogers emphasizes that interpersonal communication often has a stronger influence on shaping attitudes and adoption decisions due to its two-way nature and the closer social relationships it involves. In contrast, mass media channels are effective in raising awareness during the early stages of diffusion. Time also plays a critical role, both in the context of the innovation-decision process (e.g., the time required for an individual to move from awareness to decision), the rate of adoption within a system (as illustrated by the adoption curve over time), and the categorization of adopters (innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards), which is based on the relative time of adoption within a social group (Rogers, 2003). Finally, the social system includes the norms, networks, and social structures in which diffusion occurs. It determines how opinion leadership, both horizontal and vertical communication, and institutional support can either facilitate or hinder the diffusion of innovation.

In the context of this study, Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations framework serves as the foundation for analyzing the communication process surrounding the MyUT application at Universitas Terbuka (UT). The stages of diffusion provide a lens through which to understand

the innovation journey of MyUT—from its initial introduction to the academic community to its eventual adoption by users. Meanwhile, the key elements of diffusion (innovation, communication channels, time, and social system) serve as reference points for identifying the factors that contribute to success or obstacles in the dissemination of MyUT within the UT environment.

The dissemination of innovation in open and distance higher education presents unique challenges compared to conventional face-to-face education. In the context of distance education institutions, the audience is widely dispersed, often across regions and countries, making geographical barriers particularly significant. The limited opportunities for direct or face-to-face interaction necessitate reliance on indirect communication channels, both synchronous and asynchronous. Digital platforms such as websites, email, learning management systems (LMS), social media, mobile applications, and video conferencing tools become essential for reaching students and staff across distant locations. However, digital communication alone may be insufficient due to the absence of personal nuances and the immediacy that direct interactions offer. Therefore, a combination of digital and interpersonal channels remains necessary. This includes support from tutors, study groups, video conferencing sessions, or limited face-to-face meetings during registration or orientation at regional offices (UT Regional Centers).

Gunawardena et al. (2010) emphasize the importance of guidance and scaffolding in online interactions to enable users (e.g., students) to fully benefit from innovations (Croxtan, 2014). Meanwhile, Sugilar (2017), in his study on the adoption of online examinations at Universitas Terbuka (UT), describes UT as a “hotbed of technological innovation in higher education,” indicating its fertile ground for educational technology advancements. Despite the extensive development of technological innovations, student adoption levels largely depend on the effectiveness of socialization efforts and the perceived ease of access. Sugilar’s study, which adopts Rogers’ diffusion of innovation framework, reveals that factors such as perceived ease of use and relative advantage significantly influence the rate at which UT students adopt online examinations. These findings suggest that the dissemination of innovation in open and distance higher education must ensure that innovation messages highlight both the ease of use and the tangible benefits for users, while also providing adequate support to address technical or psychological barriers, such as reluctance to try new technologies.

The *MyUT* application is a recent digital innovation developed by Universitas Terbuka as part of its academic service transformation. Launched as the official application of UT, *MyUT* integrates various student services into a single platform. Its features include course registration, tuition payment, study plan (KRS) submission, access to learning materials and tutorials, exam result checking, academic progress monitoring, and access to UT's digital library (Kompas.tv, 2023). With the introduction of *MyUT*, students no longer need to access multiple systems or visit service offices in person; instead, they can independently manage almost all academic needs through the *MyUT* dashboard. This innovation is expected to enhance student engagement and strengthen the distance learning experience through technological support.

As an innovation, the *MyUT* application meets several criteria of innovation excellence as proposed by Rogers (2003). First, relative advantage: *MyUT* offers greater convenience and speed compared to previous manual procedures or fragmented systems, thus providing clear added value for students in terms of efficiency and flexibility. Second, compatibility: *MyUT* is designed to align with the needs of distance education students who require online services; the majority of Universitas Terbuka students are already familiar with smartphones and the internet, making the platform compatible with their daily routines. Third, complexity: the *MyUT* interface is intentionally kept simple and user-friendly, ensuring ease of use even for students with limited technological proficiency. Fourth, trialability: the application can be accessed incrementally, allowing students to test its features on a small scale—such as checking grades or registering for a single course—before fully transitioning to reliance on the app. Fifth, observability: the benefits of using *MyUT* are quickly tangible and visible, such as real-time notifications on registration status or grade updates, which in turn encourages other students to adopt the app after witnessing the advantages experienced by their peers.

There has been limited research specifically examining the patterns and effectiveness of the dissemination of the *MyUT* application at Universitas Terbuka (UT). As a relatively innovation, in-depth evaluations of how information about *MyUT* spreads, who serves as change agents in the field, and how users respond during the adoption process remain scarce. This case study aims to address this research gap. In contrast to previous studies, which have generally focused on the technical aspects of the system or quantitative measures of utilization, this qualitative research highlights the communication processes underlying the

dissemination of the MyUT innovation. By doing so, it seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of which communication strategies have proven effective and what obstacles have been encountered, offering valuable insights for improving the implementation of MyUT and similar innovations in the future.

Based on the background, this study focuses on the dissemination patterns of the MyUT application innovation at Universitas Terbuka (UT). The primary research question addresses how UT disseminates information and promotes the adoption of the MyUT application among its users (students and staff), what communication channels are utilized, and what strategies are implemented to ensure broad reach and comprehension. It is important to identify key actors involved in the dissemination process, such as management units at UT Headquarters, staff at regional offices, and student representatives, as well as the challenges encountered during the socialization of this innovation. The objective of this study is to describe the dissemination patterns of the MyUT application innovation at UT and to analyze the communication channels and strategies employed in the process. Theoretically, the findings are expected to contribute to the literature on innovation communication in the field of open and distance higher education, particularly in relation to the diffusion of educational technology innovations. Practically, the study aims to provide insights for UT and other distance education institutions in designing more effective innovation communication strategies in the future, so that digital innovations developed can be optimally adopted by the intended users.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the processes and context surrounding the dissemination of innovation, which involves the perceptions and social interactions of the stakeholders involved. The case study design was used to explore the phenomenon of the dissemination of the MyUT application in detail within the real-world context of Universitas Terbuka. This design allows for a comprehensive investigation of a case by drawing on various sources of information and perspectives. It is expected to reveal communication patterns, mechanisms, and contextual factors influencing the diffusion of the MyUT innovation. The main unit of analysis is the dissemination process of the MyUT application within the Universitas Terbuka environment.

The study was conducted at the Central Office of Universitas Terbuka (UT) and several regional offices (UT Daerah), including Jakarta, Banjarmasin, and Majene. These locations were selected based on the number of active students. The purposive selection of sites aimed to capture perspectives from both central and regional levels. The Central Office was chosen due to its role in developing the MyUT application and leading its dissemination efforts. Meanwhile, the selected regional offices represented varying levels of MyUT adoption, ranging from those with robust technological infrastructure and high adoption rates to those facing challenges in internet access. This purposive sampling followed criteria related to the readiness and engagement of regional office staff in the dissemination of MyUT. Research participants consisted of key informant categories: (1) UT Central Office staff responsible for the MyUT service and (2) students as users of the MyUT platform.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with the key informants previously identified. The interviews were semi-structured, guided by a set of open-ended questions that were flexibly developed throughout the conversation. The interviews with MyUT administrators focused on planned communication strategies, media used for dissemination, and the challenges encountered in educating users. Document analysis was also conducted on various materials related to the dissemination of MyUT. These documents included official MyUT promotional materials (such as brochures, posters, infographics, website announcements, and email circulars), user guides (manual books and FAQs provided by UT), recordings or slides from outreach presentations (e.g., webinars or training sessions), as well as internal reports or memos regarding the launch and evaluation of MyUT. In addition, direct observation was carried out, focusing on dissemination activities or the actual use of MyUT. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis based on the interactive model by Miles and Huberman (1992). The analysis process followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

### **3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the key findings from the analysis of the dissemination dynamics of the MyUT innovation as implemented by staff and students at Universitas Terbuka. Employing a qualitative approach and Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations framework, the study explores how the adoption process of MyUT unfolds within the context of open and distance higher education (ODHE). It also identifies the facilitating and inhibiting factors influencing the success of innovation. The analysis focuses on communication strategies, structural and

cultural challenges, the role of staff as change agents, and students' responses and expectations regarding the sustainability of digital innovation at UT. The findings are organized from both staff and student perspectives to provide a comprehensive depiction of communication dynamics, resistance, and technological adaptation practices within the diverse ODHE environment.

### **3.1 Dynamics of Innovation Dissemination among UT Staff**

#### *3.1.1 Stages of Innovation Diffusion*

For Universitas Terbuka (UT) staff, the dissemination of MyUT is not merely about introducing a new technology; it represents an effort to bridge the gap between institutional systems and the diverse digital experiences of students. Referring to Rogers' innovation-decision process framework (as cited in Singhal, 2017), UT staff recognize that the success of MyUT depends on the extent to which each stage of diffusion—knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation—can be carried out evenly. However, the effectiveness of these stages is highly contingent on the intensity of communication and the conditions of local infrastructure.

*“MyUT was initially introduced through social media and the PKBJJ program (student orientation), but new students sometimes do not fully understand it unless they practice it during the orientation.”* [Regional UT Staff]

In the initial stage, students generally become aware of MyUT through social media and student orientation programs. This indicates that not only the availability of information but also the way it is packaged and delivered through familiar channels is crucial for effective communication. The manner in which information is presented and disseminated through platforms that resonate with students plays a vital role in ensuring comprehension and engagement (Nelson & Tugwell, 2022).

The persuasion and decision-making stages are strongly influenced by students' perceptions of the ease of use and benefits of MyUT. When students encounter technical difficulties, resistance tends to arise. In such situations, the role of regional staff becomes crucial in fostering trust and encouraging adoption. This aligns with Prestiana et al. (2023), who assert that change agents (in this case, UT staff) possess the ability to accelerate adoption through supportive and informative interpersonal approaches.

*“For those who are not tech-savvy, we provide individual assistance when they visit the service center or through the WhatsApp group.”* [Regional UT Staff]



The stages of implementation and confirmation are evident through repeated use of the application, such as for course registration (KRS) or checking grades. Several staff members noted that the sustainability of adoption largely depends on students' initial experiences. This highlights the importance of user-friendliness and regularly updated information within the application.

*"If students are already familiar with the app and find it easy to use, they usually continue using it. However, if they encounter errors at the beginning, it can discourage them from further use."* [Central UT Staff]

### 3.1.2 Communication Channel Strategies

Interview findings indicate that a combination of digital and interpersonal communication channels constitutes the most effective strategy for disseminating information about MyUT. Digital channels such as websites, email, and social media are utilized to reach a wide student audience; however, they are insufficient for fostering comprehensive understanding. Staff members emphasized the importance of complementing these digital methods with interpersonal approaches, including limited face-to-face guidance at regional UT offices and interactions within student community groups. This aligns with the findings of Wihastiningrum & Kusuma (2025), which highlight the effectiveness of interpersonal communication and cultural sensitivity in delivering health-related messages.

*"If conveyed only via the website or email, the message may not be read. Therefore, it should be combined with direct explanation, especially during orientation sessions or online meetings."* [Regional UT Staff]

This aligns with the findings of Gunawardena et al. (2010), which suggest that interpersonal communication is more effective during the persuasion and adoption decision stages, as it involves social relationships and two-way dialogue. Interpersonal communication through tutors, regional UT staff, and SALUT also serves as a means to address technical inquiries directly, prevent resistance, and reinforce adoption during the implementation stage.

### 3.1.3 Dissemination Challenges

Based on interviews with UT staff, three main categories of challenges were identified in the dissemination of innovation. First, technological infrastructure limitations in certain regions significantly affect the distribution of information and the use of digital applications. This highlights the importance of adopting flexible and context-sensitive communication strategies, particularly in areas with limited digital access (Illa & Violita, 2025).

*"In Majene, the internet connection is extremely slow. We have to print the MyUT guide manually and distribute it directly to students."* [Regional UT Staff]

Second, varying levels of digital literacy among students pose a barrier to understanding, particularly for senior students or those from rural areas. Third, there is a discrepancy in information dissemination across communication channels—for example, students tend to trust information shared in informal groups more than that from official sources:

*"Sometimes students trust information from their classmates in WhatsApp groups more than from official UT channels."* [Regional UT Staff]

In today's digital era, the ability to understand, access, and utilize digital technology has become essential for everyone. However, many university students remain unfamiliar with digital tools, resulting in difficulties accessing information and taking advantage of available opportunities. The lack of access to digital literacy resources in rural areas further exacerbates the information gap among students (Adhani et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of strengthening horizontal communication networks rooted in social trust within student communities, while also enhancing the presence of official channels in the digital spaces they inhabit.

In addition to technical barriers, staff members also face structural challenges in inter-unit coordination. The lack of integration between central and regional offices often leads to inconsistencies in the dissemination of updated materials. For instance:

*"The initial materials are good, but sometimes the features have changed, while the field guidelines have not yet been updated."* [Regional UT Staff]

#### *3.1.4 The Strategic Role of Staff as Communication Agents and Innovation Facilitators*

UT staff, particularly those stationed in regional offices, play a dual role as innovation communicators and user facilitators. They are not only responsible for delivering information but also directly guiding the adoption process. These staff members serve as key figures who embody the functions of scaffolding and instructional support in innovation communication (Islam et al., 2024). This underscores the importance of enhancing staff capacity, both in terms of system understanding and communication skills, as a critical prerequisite for successful dissemination. Their role is particularly vital in the context of open and distance education, which limits opportunities for intensive face-to-face interaction.

*"We are not just administrators; we also serve as technology facilitators for students."* [Regional UT Staff]

At the central level, the MyUT development team is responsible for providing outreach materials and communication channels. However, success in the field largely depends on the active involvement of frontline staff. Therefore, they require training in communication and digital literacy to effectively fulfill their roles as agents of change (Ulfah, 2022).

### 3.1.5 Effectiveness of Strategies and Policy Implications

From the perspective of Universitas Terbuka staff, the communication strategy for the MyUT innovation would be more effective if it were designed comprehensively and contextually. They emphasized that communication cannot be uniform for all audiences, given the highly diverse characteristics of UT students.

*“A single approach should not be applied to all regions. It must be flexible, especially in remote areas where different methods of engagement are needed.”* [Regional UT Staff]

Based on interviews conducted with staff members, three key principles emerged as essential for implementing an effective MyUT innovation strategy. First, information about the innovation should be disseminated through a variety of complementary communication channels—such as social media, email, websites, and direct interpersonal communication (Badri, 2022)—to accommodate students' diverse digital preferences and habits. Second, communication approaches must be tailored to local contexts (Silaban et al., 2024), particularly with regard to geographical conditions and the availability of technological infrastructure in each region. Third, dissemination efforts should be accompanied by direct and personalized support (Marthalina & Khairina, 2022), as students often require both technical guidance and motivational assistance to feel comfortable engaging with digital innovations like MyUT.

UT staff also criticized the current dissemination approach that relies heavily on email blasts or standardized, template-based materials. They argued that such methods are insufficient to address the complex experiences of students, particularly those in underdeveloped, remote, and outermost regions (3T areas) or those unfamiliar with digital services. Consequently, several practical recommendations emerged from their field experiences. One key suggestion is the need to segment communication strategies (Sudi et al., 2023) based on geographic regions and students' levels of digital literacy, ensuring a more targeted and effective approach. Additionally, specialized training for staff and tutors is necessary so that they can serve not only as information providers but also as agents of change and technology facilitators. The role of Regional UT Offices and UT Service Centers (SALUT) as central

communication nodes at the local level must also be continuously strengthened, given their close proximity to students. Finally, staff recommended that UT develop a more participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanism by providing open online feedback forums to capture users' aspirations and needs on an ongoing basis.

### **3.2 Dynamics of Innovation Dissemination among UT Students**

#### *3.2.1 Alignment of Innovation with Students' Needs and Expectations*

Most students indicated that the *MyUT* innovation aligns well with the demands of distance learning, which requires flexible and efficient services. The application is perceived as helpful in accessing a range of academic services, such as registration, course enrollment (KRS), grade checking, and examination information, without the need to visit a physical service office. This reinforces previous findings that highlight relative advantage and compatibility as key factors in user adoption (Handrian & Novita, 2025).

*"This application is very helpful in many aspects, such as registration, online KRS, access to exam schedules, grades, and other important information—all in one application."*

[Respondent 2]

Beyond fulfilling basic needs, some students even reported that the innovation exceeded their expectations:

*"All services can be accessed through a single application, and that makes everything much easier."* [Respondent 3]

However, there were critical notes regarding the limitations of interactive features and the need for faster system responses, especially during peak access times. These concerns highlight the importance of ongoing development in system performance and user experience design to ensure continued relevance with the expectations of today's digital-native students (Nugraha et al., 2025).

#### *3.2.2 Challenges in the Dissemination of Innovation*

Although information about *MyUT* is available through various channels, many students perceive a lack of communicative approaches that are both personal and practical. The information is often delivered in a formal and one-way manner, without easily accessible technical guidance.

*"The information is presented in long texts with minimal visuals. As a result, students are often uninterested or do not read it at all."* [Respondent 5]

This finding aligns with Solihah et al. (2025), who emphasize that effective communication of digital innovations requires scaffolding and interactive support, especially in open and distance learning environments where a high degree of learner autonomy is expected.

### 3.2.3 *Students' Perspectives on Ideal Strategies for Innovation Dissemination*

Students proposed a variety of strategies for delivering innovative content in ways that are more engaging, interactive, and aligned with contemporary communication styles. Students at Universitas Terbuka offered several creative suggestions regarding the dissemination of innovation, emphasizing approaches that are fresh, participatory, and consistent with their daily digital communication habits. One frequently mentioned idea was the importance of integrating an "Innovation Corner" feature within the MyUT application—a dedicated space presenting the latest information on institutional innovations, complete with video tutorials, practical guides, and a Q&A forum to enable direct discussion among students.

In addition, they proposed that UT should actively conduct regular social media campaigns by utilizing short-form content formats such as reels, dynamic infographics, or testimonial videos from fellow students. Such content is perceived as more accessible, relatable, and effective in generating interest in the new features available on MyUT. Furthermore, students recommended that information about innovations be integrated directly into online tutorial sessions so that active students are exposed to these developments through their primary learning channels. To enhance user awareness, they also suggested implementing an automatic notification system within the application to alert users of new features or service changes.

*"Invite active students or alumni to share their experiences with UT's innovations through social media or webinars to foster a sense of closeness,"* [Respondent 8].

This approach highlights the importance of two-way, community-based media in disseminating innovations among distance learning students (Bachtiar et al., 2025). Students not only wish to receive information but also aspire to be part of its dissemination process.

### 3.2.4 *Students' Expectations for Future Innovations*

Students hold high and multifaceted expectations regarding future innovations. They seek not only improved accessibility but also enhanced personalization in learning, interactivity, and equitable access—particularly for students in underdeveloped (3T) regions.

*"Hopefully, there will be an academic chatbot or AI tutor feature that can directly answer technical and academic questions within the app."* [Respondent 9]

They also express hopes for improved technical performance, including application stability, integrated services within a single platform, and greater flexibility in assessments and project-based examinations. These expectations indicate that innovation must go beyond basic functionality and evolve in line with students' learning styles and the dynamic nature of digital education.

### 3.2.5 Student Feedback Management toward Innovation

Most students have not yet developed the habit of providing formal feedback. However, they expressed a willingness to engage if accessible and active channels were available. Some students noted that Universitas Terbuka (UT) has shown responsiveness to surveys or complaints on social media, although the outcomes have not yet been clearly reflected in tangible improvements.

*"I once gave input regarding the interaction feature on MyUT. UT responded openly, but no major changes have been seen so far."* [Respondent 6]

Strengthening the feedback loop system would significantly contribute to enhancing students' sense of ownership toward the systems they use. This aligns with Hatala & Latuconsina (2023), who emphasized that sustainable adoption requires reciprocal communication and routine evaluation based on user experience.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of in-depth interviews with staff and students, as well as document studies and observations, it can be concluded that the dissemination of the MyUT innovation is a complex process that involves not only digital information delivery but also interpersonal interactions and adaptation to local contexts. From the staff's perspective, the communication of innovation follows the stages outlined in the innovation-decision process model—knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. While digital channels such as email, social media, and official websites play a significant role in the initial diffusion stage, the effectiveness of adoption largely depends on interpersonal communication through tutors, service staff, and academic advisors, particularly for students with limited access or low digital literacy. According to staff, effective communication strategies for MyUT are those that are multimodal, flexible, and context sensitive. Reliance on a single communication channel is deemed insufficient to reach the diverse characteristics of UT students. Regional staff serve as key change agents who not only convey information but also assist students in using the application and foster trust in the system.

From the students' perspective, the majority responded positively to the presence of MyUT, as the application is perceived to align well with the demands of distance learning, particularly in terms of convenience, flexibility, and efficiency of academic services. However, students also identified several challenges, including limited interactive features, insufficiently clear information, and the absence of an integrated feedback system. They expressed the need for a more communicative innovation communication strategy—one that leverages visual content and actively involves students in the dissemination of information.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

In general, this study indicates that the successful dissemination of the MyUT innovation is influenced by four key elements of innovation diffusion: the characteristics of innovation, communication channels, the duration of the adoption process, and the social system. MyUT demonstrates a high degree of relative advantage and compatibility with the needs of distance learning students. However, its success remains heavily dependent on communication strategies and institutional support. The combination of digital and interpersonal communication channels, the involvement of staff as facilitators, and the development of communication strategies tailored to local conditions are essential for expanding and deepening the adoption of this innovation within Universitas Terbuka. This study underscores the importance of designing innovation communication not merely as an information delivery activity, but as a dialogic process that acknowledges user diversity and emphasizes the active role of the academic community in fostering educational technology innovations.

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