Interdisciplinary approaches in Humanities: A modern perspective

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Abstract

In the modern world that is becoming more globalised, the exchange of cultural knowledge (including ideas, concepts, imaginative forms, and techniques) is not only beneficial for creative interactions, but also for facilitating "cross-cultural tensions or misunderstandings". Interdisciplinary research that may bridge the cultural divide across disparate disciplines and areas of study is becoming more and more in demand as a result of the humanities' present research that promotes cross-cultural academic knowledge exchange. This article review examines the many studies on interdisciplinary methods in the humanities that have been conducted. This review highlights that interdisciplinary approaches in the humanities have evolved significantly with the integration of digital tools, big data, and artificial intelligence. Digital humanities education now emphasizes not only technical proficiency but also the fusion of diverse disciplinary knowledge and practical application. Courses across universities reflect this trend, offering training in text analysis, digital publishing, and spatial humanities. The convergence of traditional humanities with fields like data science and IT fosters broader perspectives and innovative solutions to complex social issues. By bridging disciplines such as philosophy, linguistics, and literature, interdisciplinary research enhances dialogue and expands the scope of humanistic inquiry.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary Approaches, Humanities, Philosophy, Linguistics, Literature, Interdisciplinary Research, Digital Tools, Big Data, and Artificial Intelligence.

1 Introduction

Interdisciplinary approaches, resources, and ideas from several disciplines are combined into a coherent framework, which acts as a major catalyst for the advancement of scientific knowledge. By combining several points of view and styles, this method offers a distinctive viewpoint that is very helpful in navigating the complex issues of the Information Age [1]. Interdisciplinary research becomes an essential tool for addressing the complexity of the contemporary world as information spreads across sectors and disciplines increasingly converge. Its efficacy has been demonstrated in the context of complex issues such as globalisation, healthcare, and climate change. Universities are creating graduate programs and interdisciplinary research centres that connect the social and scientific sciences because many believe that interdisciplinary studies are the way of the future [2].

The dissemination of cultural information (ideas, concepts, imaginative forms, and processes) may lead to both creative encounters and cross-cultural difficulties or misunderstandings in today's increasingly globalised society [3]. Interdisciplinary research that may bridge the cultural divide across disparate disciplines and areas of study is becoming more and more in demand as a result of the humanities' present research that promotes cross-cultural academic knowledge exchange. Therefore, it is difficult for the scholar to bridge the divide between the many disciplines and concerns based on culture and to delve into the sensitive subject of the terminological and cultural disparities between the various disciplines and cultural regions [4].

A. Interdisciplinary

The integration of many academic fields into a single endeavour (such as a research project) is known as interdisciplinarity or interdisciplinary studies. It incorporates information from a variety of disciplines, including economics, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. As new demands and professions arise, it is associated with an interdisciplinary field, also known as an interdiscipline, which is an organisational unit that transcends conventional boundaries among "academic disciplines or schools of thought" [5]. A power station, mobile phone, or other project necessitates the consolidation of numerous specialities, which is why large engineering teams are typically interdisciplinary. But sometimes, the phrase "interdisciplinary" is limited to academic contexts [6].

In the context of education and training pedagogies, the word "interdisciplinary" refers to research that incorporates ideas and techniques from many conventional areas of study or well-established disciplines. Interdisciplinarity is the process of establishing a connection and integrating multiple academic schools of thought, professions, or technologies, as well as their respective perspectives, in order to achieve a shared objective [7]. This is performed by researchers, students, and instructors. Complex issues necessitate comprehension of a variety of disciplines, such as "the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS or global warming". The term "interdisciplinary" may be employed in cases where the subject is perceived as having been overlooked or even misrepresented in the conventional disciplinary structure of research institutions. For instance, women's studies or ethnic area studies. Similarly, interdisciplinarity may be used to explain complicated topics that require integrating the viewpoints of two or more disciplines [8].

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B. Humanities

The word "humanities" encompasses a broad variety of academic fields that investigate the many facets of human civilisation, including languages, literature, philosophy, history, art, and religion. The goal of humanities courses is to investigate the principles, convictions, concepts, and manifestations that influence and mirror the human condition. The goal of humanities education is to help students acquire critical thinking, communication, creativity, and empathy abilities that they may employ in any area of endeavour, rather than preparing them for a particular career [9].

Humanitas, which meaning "human nature" or "human quality," is the Latin term from which the word "humanities" is derived. During the ancient period, the humanities were regarded as essential for the education of a free and intelligent individual, including history, rhetoric, poetry, and grammar. They were contrasted with fields like engineering, medicine, and law that were helpful for real-world applications [10].

Sociology, anthropology, media studies, gender studies, and other modern and current topics that address the cultural and social aspects of human existence are now included in the definition of the humanities, in addition to the classical subjects. The interdisciplinary nature of the humanities stream encourages students to investigate the relationships and exchanges between many subjects of study [11].

C. Historical Development of Interdisciplinary Approaches

Similar to the development of disciplines, the conceptual foundations of interdisciplinarity are rooted in the Western academic tradition. There is evidence of knowledge categorisation efforts dating back to the oldest known eras, ranging from Pythagorean theory of the four types of knowledge to Eastern classifications like the Indian Darshanas [12]. Since it suggests that love is connected to all the desired purposes of human endeavour, the well-known apophthegm of Diotima in Plato's Symposium, which was produced within the framework of a different kind of classification, may be seen as both a classification and intrinsically interdisciplinary [13]. In Plato's Phaedo, the Socratic teaching of the universal of the Ionic thinker Anaxagoras is examined. Nevertheless, these early attempts evolved into a pursuit of a more exclusive methodology during the Socratic period, resulting in a division among cosmological theory based on demonstrative reasoning and the Socratic concern with what could be articulated in universal concepts [14]. The term "universitas" was adopted by educational institutions to represent the Greek concept of the organised divisions of human knowledge from the late Roman and early Christian thinkers onwards. The implicit concept was that unity is found in the vision of God, despite the exceptions, particularly among the scholastics and in Leonardo da Vinci's writing [15]. This concept became increasingly similar to the model of sectarian theological faculties ordained by the church. The emergence of the modern university in the Napoleonic universities was characterised by the development of specialised areas of religion, law, medicine, and the arts. Theologians, who sought to establish a system of cosmology that was independent of the world of the visible and had a transcendental foundation essentially based on revelation, were disinterested in this development [16]. This development continued from this period onwards.

D. The importance of interdisciplinary education in the 21st century

1. Encouraging critical thinking and problem solving

Interdisciplinary education encourages the development of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Students are compelled to consider alternative solutions and think beyond their own discipline when they are exposed to a variety of perspectives and approaches. This can result in a wider understanding of the intricacies of real-world problems, as well as more innovative and effective problem-solving.

2. Preparing students for the future job market

Students who get an interdisciplinary education are more prepared for the contemporary workforce. According to the World Economic Forum, the most sought-after talents in the labour market today are not exclusive to any one industry but rather call for a blend of abilities from many fields. For instance, businesses are increasingly seeking workers with soft skills like teamwork and communication in addition to technical talents. Students that participate in interdisciplinary programs get these desirable qualities by receiving a more well-rounded education.

3. Innovation

New discoveries and innovations are another essential characteristic of interdisciplinary education. Researchers from many disciplines might work together to address challenges that would otherwise be insurmountable by pooling their knowledge. For instance, advances in environmental science and bioengineering have been made possible via multidisciplinary study.

4. Fostering diversity and inclusion

By being exposed to a variety of perspectives and modes of thought, students are better prepared to comprehend and empathise with individuals from diverse backgrounds. People of various colours, genders, and cultures may feel appreciated and respected in a more inclusive community as a result.

2 Literature Review

(Boateng, 2025) [17] Contemporary approaches in the social sciences and humanities are a reflection of changing multidisciplinary frameworks and techniques that address current technical, social, and cultural issues. These disciplines, which have historically focused on the study of society, culture, and human behaviour, have included new methods and viewpoints from critical theory, digital technology, and globalised settings. Traditional research methodologies have been redefined by the emergence of computational methods, artificial intelligence, and big data, which have facilitated more intricate analyses of political dynamics, cultural production, and social patterns. Postmodern and decolonial theories, on the other hand, have moved their emphasis to challenging conventional wisdom, elevating under-represented voices, and stressing the malleability of identity and power dynamics. Humanities and social science research nowadays also places a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary cooperation, combining political science, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and history to study topics like migration, inequality, and climate change.

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(Rana et al., 2025) [18] In this review, the advantages, difficulties, and educational effects of multidisciplinary methods in PhD research are examined. The study included research articles that looked at multidisciplinary teamwork in doctorate studies, emphasising the advantages including research flexibility, professional preparedness, and skill versatility. Institutional silos, communication hurdles, and disparities in academic culture were among the difficulties that were mentioned. It was underlined how supervisors and academic institutions may promote collaborative settings and interdisciplinary research. According to the study, multidisciplinary methods may improve doctorate education and equip graduates to address global issues. Future approaches for promoting interdisciplinary cooperation in higher education are outlined, along with the need of better integrating interdisciplinary practices in doctorate research.

(Benlahcene et al., 2024) [19] The idea of interdisciplinarity is still quite contentious, despite the fact that it has recently grown popular in academic and scientific circles at universities and research facilities. Three primary interdisciplinarity-related issues serve as the basis for this study's engagement with interdisciplinary studies. Examining common misconceptions about interdisciplinarity research, the first inquiry explores its nature. In order to determine if a normative interdisciplinary model is emerging from the literature, the second inquiry investigates suggested models for interdisciplinary research and their criteria. In contrast, the third inquiry concentrates on the challenges and opportunities that interdisciplinary research encounters in academic settings. Several researchers from various fields contributed to the writing of this research paper in an effort to address these issues. They critically examined the body of existing literature on interdisciplinarity and offered a thorough theoretical review grounded in three levels of analysis.

(Jin, 2024) [20] The findings of the study demonstrate that curriculum designs and models for teaching digital humanities exhibit a variety of traits that represent the knowledge and application of digital humanities education across various academic institutions. In addition to expanding students' knowledge bases and offering fresh approaches to challenging social issues, the growth of digital humanities encourages the fusion of traditional humanities with contemporary scientific and technical fields. Universities and colleges should provide forums for collaboration and exchange, offer a variety of flexible course alternatives, improve their relationship with industry, and share their teaching resources and expertise. By means of ongoing research and practice, we will produce digital humanities professionals with creative skills and interdisciplinary literacy, therefore advancing the humanities and society.

(Novis-Deutsch et al., 2024) [21] In contrast to its STEM counterparts, K–12 interdisciplinary learning in the humanities (IL-Humanities) has received less attention in the research community up to this point. By (1) offering and operationalising an assessment tool for interdisciplinary competencies, (2) proving the value of IL-Humanities environments in cultivating these competencies, and (3) expanding our knowledge of students' involvement in transdisciplinary identity work and cross-disciplinary knowledge building, this study advances the field of interdisciplinary education research.

(Nowell et al., 2022) [22] In recent years, literature evaluations have earned a greater appreciation for their contribution to the advancement of knowledge and decision-making across various fields. In order to ensure that the study was methodologically rigorous, transparent, and useful, we discuss theoretical and practical aspects in this paper, as well as our experiences doing an interdisciplinary mixed-methods systematic review. Working on an interdisciplinary mixed-methods systematic review as a team of academics from the fields of education, medicine, nursing, and social work, we provide insights from our own experiences as an open example of how we accepted the difficulties of our project and overcame the bottlenecks that frequently arise in interdisciplinary research.

(Costa, 2019) [23] It is important to note that this prejudice against degrees in the humanities is indirect in character since it is mostly the consequence of the methodical advancement of other disciplines, such as business management. Nevertheless, in comparison to other fields, this pattern has led to a significant decline in the proportion of graduates in the humanities across a group of 30 OECD nations. Examples of international political guidelines that have contributed to this devaluation that were established by the World Bank and the OECD are discussed in this article. It evaluates the advantages and worth of studying the humanities while examining the effects of declining resources in academic departments both within and outside of universities. It is argued that a society predicated on information ought to be more open and receptive to the many and distinctive disciplines that generate it, giving each area of study equal and fair weight.

(Cymbalista & Kallaus, 2019) [24] Discussing the benefits of interdisciplinary study in the humanities is the aim of this essay. As the product of the research of Bulgarian, Polish, and Slovenian academics from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the New Bulgarian University, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, this multidisciplinary study is also cross-cultural in nature. Beyond the confines of particular study fields, this productive research approach creates a common basis for debate and opens the door for communication between the readers, the disciplines they represent, and the individual researchers. It also produces an overall image of the object.

(Mason & Merga, 2018) [25] There has been a growing push in recent years for Australian institutions to publish throughout the candidacy process for a variety of strategic objectives that are in line with the contemporary academic landscape. These objectives may be furthered by completing a thesis by publication (TBP). Although this method is not new, not much is known about how it is used in "the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)". Although the quantity and kind of papers included in TBPs vary greatly, on average, there are 4.5 papers included. The inclusion of academic publications that have not yet been published or in which the applicant is not the primary author is noteworthy. Traditional scholarly publications, such as conference proceedings and journal articles, seem to be heavily utilised.

3 Research Gap

Despite the growing emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches in humanities, several research gaps persist. Much existing literature focuses on theoretical benefits but lacks empirical evidence on the practical implementation and long-term impact of such integration in academic and research settings.

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There is limited exploration of how digital tools are effectively used across disciplines and how students and educators adapt to interdisciplinary curricula. Moreover, the role of local cultures, non-Western perspectives, and community-driven research in interdisciplinary humanities remains underexplored. Addressing these gaps is essential to develop more inclusive, effective, and context-sensitive interdisciplinary models that truly enrich humanistic inquiry in the modern era.

4 Research Objective

- In this article study the Historical Development of Interdisciplinary Approaches.

- Study the importance of interdisciplinary education in the 21st century.

- Study the various literature on Interdisciplinary Approaches in humanities.

5 Research Methodology

This review paper adopts a qualitative research methodology, relying on secondary data and comprehensive literature analysis to explore the modern perspective on interdisciplinary approaches in humanities. The study examines academic journals, scholarly articles, reports, and case studies published between 2013 and 2025 to provide a well-rounded and up-to-date understanding of the subject. By synthesizing insights from diverse disciplines—including literature, history, linguistics, computer science, and library science—the paper critically investigates how interdisciplinary frameworks are being integrated and applied. This approach enables a nuanced analysis of the evolution, implementation, and impact of interdisciplinary practices within the humanities domain.

6 Conclusion

The review highlights that interdisciplinary approaches in the humanities have become essential in addressing complex questions in today's rapidly evolving academic and technological landscape. The integration of big data, artificial intelligence, and computational methods has revolutionized traditional research practices, allowing for more refined analyses of cultural, social, and political phenomena. Digital humanities education reflects this shift by offering diverse curricula that combine technical proficiency with deep humanistic inquiry. Courses in text analysis, spatial humanities, and digital publishing not only teach the use of digital tools but also foster the ability to apply them within humanistic contexts. This evolution encourages a fusion of disciplines such as literature, philosophy, linguistics, and history with fields like information technology and data science. As a result, students and scholars gain broader perspectives and develop innovative methodologies to tackle real-world challenges. Furthermore, interdisciplinary research fosters collaboration across academic boundaries, facilitating richer and more inclusive dialogues. It allows for a more comprehensive understanding of material culture, perception, and meaning by uniting insights from philosophy, semiotics, and literature. Ultimately, the interdisciplinary model enhances both academic inquiry and practical problem-solving, making it a vital and sustainable approach for the future of the humanities in a digitally connected world.

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