

# Interdisciplinary Studies: New Prospect in the Horizon of Basic Sciences, Challenges, and Opportunities.

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**By: Prof. Dr. Elham Hassan Ahmed Ali**

Professor of Physiology, Faculty of Women for Arts, Sciences, and Education,  
Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt.



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## Introduction

Interdisciplinary sciences refer to the integration of knowledge from different fields to solve complex problems. It involves collaborations between scientists, engineers, and researchers from various disciplines to create new knowledge and innovation. Interdisciplinary sciences are essential in addressing today's global challenges, such as climate change, pandemics, and energy shortages. The interdisciplinary approach has been adopted in various fields, including biology, chemistry, physics, environmental science, and engineering. The benefits of interdisciplinary sciences include the ability to tackle complex problems by bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise (National Academy of Sciences, 2004; Kuehnle, 2019).

One example of interdisciplinary research is in the field of environmental science, where scientists from different disciplines work together to understand the impact of human activities on the environment. This involves collaborations between chemists, physicists, biologists, and engineers to study the chemistry and physics of the atmosphere, water, and soil. By combining knowledge from different fields, scientists can develop a more comprehensive understanding of environmental issues and develop solutions that are effective and sustainable (Jackson & Ray, 2020).

Another example is in the field of biotechnology, where interdisciplinary research has led to significant advancements in the development of new drugs, vaccines, and therapies. Biotechnology involves collaborations between biologists, chemists, engineers, and clinicians to develop new technologies for the treatment of diseases. By combining knowledge from different fields, researchers can develop new drugs that target specific biological pathways, leading to more effective and personalized treatments for patients (Jackson & Ray, 2020).

Interdisciplinary sciences also play a crucial role in addressing global challenges such as climate change. Climate change is a complex problem that requires an interdisciplinary approach involving scientists, engineers, policymakers, and stakeholders from different sectors. By combining knowledge from different fields, researchers can develop solutions that are effective and sustainable, such as renewable energy technologies, carbon capture and storage, and sustainable agriculture practices.

In conclusion, interdisciplinary sciences play a crucial role in addressing complex problems and advancing knowledge in various fields. By bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise, interdisciplinary research leads to new discoveries and innovations that could not be achieved through traditional disciplinary approaches. As we continue to face global challenges, interdisciplinary research will be essential in developing effective and sustainable solutions (Jackson & Ray, 2020).

## Challenges in Interdisciplinary Fields

Interdisciplinary fields are becoming increasingly important in addressing complex problems that require collaboration and integration of knowledge from different disciplines. However, interdisciplinary research also faces several challenges that can hinder progress and limit the effectiveness of the research. Some of these challenges include:

1. **Communication barriers:** Communication is critical in interdisciplinary research as it involves individuals from different disciplines who may have different perspectives, terminologies, and research methods. This can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and delays in research progress (Hackett, 2005).
2. **Funding:** Interdisciplinary research may require additional resources and funding, which can be a challenge as funding agencies and organizations may have specific criteria for funding, and interdisciplinary research proposals may not fit within these criteria.
3. **Institutional barriers:** Institutions may have disciplinary structures that do not support interdisciplinary research, leading to limited opportunities for collaboration, resources, and recognition.
4. **Different research methodologies:** Researchers from different disciplines may have different research methods, techniques, and standards, making it difficult to integrate and compare data from different sources.
5. **Conflicting goals and objectives:** Interdisciplinary research involves collaboration between individuals with different goals and objectives, which can lead to conflicts and misunderstandings.
6. **Lack of recognition:** Interdisciplinary research is often undervalued in academic and scientific communities, leading to a lack of recognition and reward for researchers (Klein, 2008).

To overcome these challenges, interdisciplinary researchers must develop effective communication strategies, establish clear goals and objectives, identify common research methodologies, and seek out funding sources that support interdisciplinary research. Institutions can also promote interdisciplinary research by creating supportive structures, recognizing interdisciplinary research as a valuable contribution to their fields, and providing resources and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations. Overall, interdisciplinary research requires a concerted effort to overcome these challenges to achieve the full potential of interdisciplinary research (Jacob & Hellström, 2018).



## Opportunities of Interdisciplinary Studies

Interdisciplinary studies offer a range of opportunities for individuals, communities, and organizations, including:

**Increased innovation:** When individuals from different fields work together, they bring with them unique perspectives, experiences, and knowledge. This can lead to innovative solutions that might not have been possible with a single discipline. Truitt (2014) argues that interdisciplinary studies can lead to increased innovation through collaboration and the exchange of ideas from different fields.

**Broader understanding:** Interdisciplinary studies encourage individuals to broaden their knowledge and understanding beyond their area of expertise. This can help them develop a more well-rounded perspective and make better-informed decisions. Huber & Hutchings (2004), explains how interdisciplinary studies can help students develop a broader understanding of complex issues and develop critical thinking skills.

**Addressing complex problems:** Many of the challenges we face today, such as climate change and healthcare, require solutions that cut across multiple disciplines. Interdisciplinary studies provide a platform for individuals to work together to develop comprehensive solutions. Mehta (2017) discusses how interdisciplinary studies can be used to address complex issues such as climate change and healthcare.

**Career opportunities:** Interdisciplinary studies can open up new career opportunities that may not be available within a single discipline. This is especially true for fields such as sustainability, where there is a growing need for individuals with a broad range of skills. Fagan (2017) discusses how interdisciplinary studies can open up new career opportunities, especially in fields such as sustainability and social entrepreneurship.

**Personal growth:** Interdisciplinary studies can be personally enriching, as individuals learn to appreciate and understand different perspectives. This can help them develop greater empathy and improve their communication skills. Hmelo-Silver & Chinn (2013) argues that interdisciplinary studies can help individuals develop greater empathy and improve their communication skills.

Overall, interdisciplinary studies offer a wide range of benefits and opportunities, making them an important tool for individuals and organizations looking to solve complex problems and innovate in today's world. Interdisciplinary studies involve combining multiple disciplines to approach a complex problem or issue from various angles. There are many opportunities for interdisciplinary studies (Jaschik, 2019; Klein, 2019; and Klein, 2021), some of which are outlined below:

**Health and Technology:** The integration of health and technology has opened up new opportunities for interdisciplinary studies. For example, biomedical engineering combines principles from engineering, medicine, and biology to develop medical devices and technologies.

**Environmental Studies:** Environmental studies draw from a variety of disciplines, including biology, ecology, geography, and political science. It offers opportunities to address complex environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, and sustainable development.

**Social and Behavioral Sciences:** The social and behavioral sciences, including sociology, psychology, and anthropology, can provide valuable insights into human behavior and decision-making. Combining these disciplines with others such as economics, political science, or neuroscience can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of social phenomena.

**Business and Technology:** The intersection of business and technology offers opportunities for interdisciplinary studies, including fields such as management information systems, digital marketing, and e-commerce.

**Data Science:** The field of data science brings together skills from computer science, statistics, and mathematics to analyze and interpret large data sets. This interdisciplinary approach has led to new discoveries in fields such as genetics, social media, and finance.

## Interdisciplinary Fields in the Basic Sciences

Interdisciplinary research has been increasingly important in recent years, particularly in the basic sciences. Some of the new interdisciplinary fields in basic sciences include:

**Systems biology:** Systems biology integrates knowledge from biology, mathematics, physics, and computer science to study biological systems as a whole rather than individual parts. This interdisciplinary field seeks to understand the complex interactions between genes, proteins, and other molecules that make up living organisms. (Kirschner, 2005)

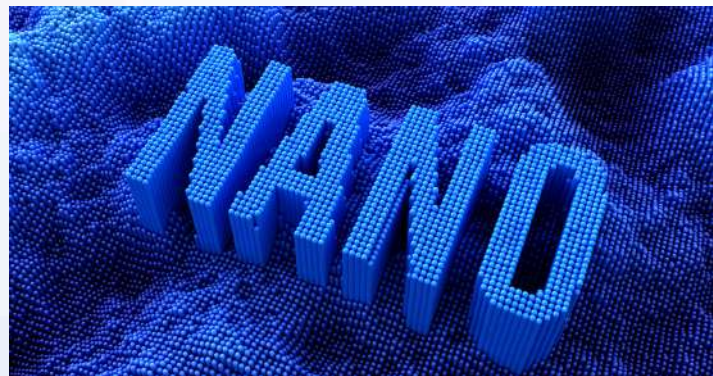
**Materials science:** Materials science is an interdisciplinary field that combines knowledge from physics, chemistry, and engineering to study the properties of materials at the atomic and molecular levels. This field has applications in a wide range of areas, including energy, electronics, and medicine. (Roco, 2003)

**Neuroengineering:** Neuroengineering combines knowledge from neuroscience, engineering, and computer science to develop technologies that can be used to study and manipulate the nervous system. This interdisciplinary field has applications in areas such as brain-machine interfaces, neural prosthetics, and neuropharmacology. (Buzsáki, 2011)

**Nanoscience:** Nanoscience is an interdisciplinary field that combines knowledge from physics, chemistry, and materials science to study materials at the nanoscale. This field has applications in areas such as electronics, medicine, and energy. (Feynman, 1959)

**Astrobiology:** Astrobiology is an interdisciplinary field that combines knowledge from astronomy, biology, and geology to study the origins, evolution, and distribution of life in the universe. This field has applications in areas such as exoplanet research, the search for extraterrestrial life, and the study of the origins of life on Earth. (Des Marais et al., 2008)

Overall, these new interdisciplinary fields in basic sciences highlight the importance of collaboration and integration of knowledge from different disciplines to address complex problems and advance scientific knowledge.

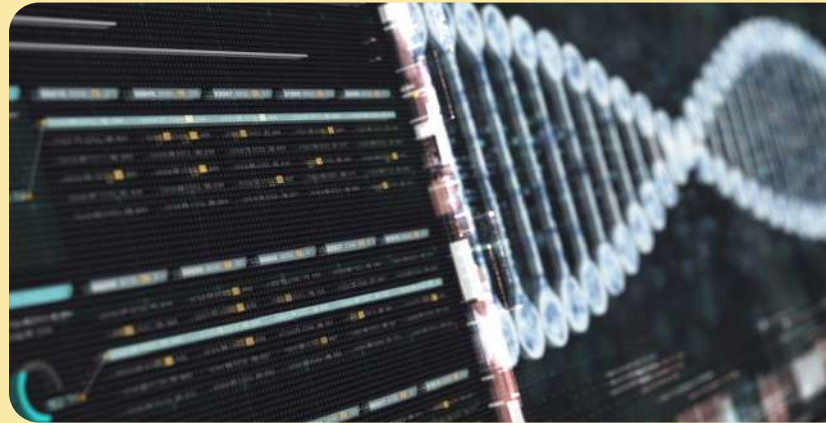


## Bioinformatics as an Interdisciplinary Science

Bioinformatics is an interdisciplinary field that combines computer science, mathematics, and biology to analyze and interpret biological data.

**Definition:** "Bioinformatics is the science of managing, analyzing, and interpreting biological data using computational methods." (Baxevanis & Ouellette, 2005). Bioinformatics is used in many different areas of biology and biotechnology, such as genetic engineering, synthetic biology, and bioprocessing. In genetic engineering, bioinformatics is used to design and construct genetic circuits and organisms with specific properties. In synthetic biology, bioinformatics is used to design and optimize biological systems for specific applications. In bioprocessing, bioinformatics is used to analyze and optimize fermentation and purification processes for the production of biopharmaceuticals and other bioproducts (Nielsen & Keasling, 2016). Bioinformatics is used in many different areas of biology and medicine, such as drug discovery, personalized medicine, and systems biology. In drug discovery, bioinformatics is used to identify potential drug targets and to design drugs with specific properties. In personalized medicine, bioinformatics is used to analyze an individual's genetic and molecular data to determine the best course of treatment. In systems biology, bioinformatics is used to model and analyze complex biological systems, such as metabolic pathways and signaling networks (Kumar & Sharma, 2018).

Overall, bioinformatics is a crucial field that plays a key role in the analysis and interpretation of biological data. Its ability to combine computational and biological methods has the potential to revolutionize many areas of biology and medicine.



### Importance of Bioinformatics

Bioinformatics is a powerful tool used in various areas of biological research and medicine such as:

**Genomics:** Bioinformatics is essential for the analysis and interpretation of large-scale genomic data. It is used to identify genetic variations associated with diseases, predict protein function, and understand the evolution of species (Wang et al., 2009).

**Proteomics:** Bioinformatics tools are used to analyze the vast amounts of data generated by proteomics studies, including protein identification, quantification, and function prediction (Nesvizhskii & Aebersold, 2005).

**Drug Discovery:** Bioinformatics is used in drug discovery to identify potential drug targets and to design drugs that are more effective and have fewer side effects (Hopkins & Groom, 2002).

**Comparative Genomics:** Bioinformatics is used to compare the genomes of different species to understand the genetic basis of evolution and to identify conserved genes and regulatory elements (Koonin, 2005).

**Metagenomics:** Bioinformatics is used to analyze the vast amounts of data generated by metagenomics studies, which aim to understand the microbial communities present in different environments (Qin et al., 2010).

Overall, bioinformatics has a wide range of applications in biological research and medicine, and it is becoming an increasingly important tool in these fields.

## Neuroinformatic

Neuroinformatics is an interdisciplinary field that involves the integration of neuroscience, computer science, and information technology to advance our understanding of the brain and nervous system.

Definition: "Neuroinformatics can be defined as the integration and analysis of complex neurobiological data sets using computational and mathematical models and tools." (Jones et al., 2009). Neuroinformatics is used to develop tools and resources for neuroscientists, such as databases of brain structures and functions, computational models of brain activity, and visualization tools for brain imaging data. It is also used to study the neural basis of behavior, cognition, and disease (Bota et al., 2012). Neuroinformatics is used also to develop tools and methods for integrating data from different sources, such as genetic, anatomical, and functional data. It is also used to facilitate collaboration among researchers, and to promote the sharing of data and knowledge across different domains of neuroscience research (Amari et al., 2019). Overall, neuroinformatics is an important field of interdisciplinary studies that has the potential to transform our understanding of the brain and nervous system.

## Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology is an interdisciplinary field that involves the study and manipulation of materials on a nanoscale level, typically 1 to 100 nanometers in size.

Definition: "Nanotechnology is the design, synthesis, characterization, and application of materials and devices with structures, properties, and functions that emerge at the nanometer scale." (National Science Foundation, 2017). Nanotechnology is used in many different fields, such as electronics, medicine, and energy. In electronics, nanotechnology is used to create smaller and more efficient devices, such as transistors and memory chips. In medicine, nanotechnology is used to develop targeted drug delivery systems and imaging agents. In energy, nanotechnology is used to improve the efficiency of solar cells and create more efficient batteries. (Sanvicens & Marco, 2008; and Zhang & Webster, 2019). Overall, nanotechnology is a rapidly growing field with a wide range of applications across many different industries. Its ability to manipulate materials on a nanoscale level has the potential to revolutionize fields such as electronics, medicine, and energy.

## Conclusion:

Interdisciplinary studies have emerged as a new prospect in the horizon of basic sciences. Interdisciplinary studies involve the integration of knowledge and approaches from multiple fields, in order to address complex problems and to create new areas of research. This approach is particularly relevant in the basic sciences, where researchers often need to collaborate across different disciplines in order to understand complex phenomena. Interdisciplinary studies can also provide a more holistic perspective on scientific research, by allowing researchers to explore the social and cultural contexts in which scientific discoveries are made. This can help researchers to better understand the implications of their research, and to communicate their findings to a broader audience. Overall, interdisciplinary studies offer new opportunities for scientific research, by allowing researchers to break down traditional disciplinary boundaries and to explore new areas of inquiry. As such, interdisciplinary studies are likely to become an increasingly important part of the scientific landscape in the coming years (Klein, 2010).

**Note:** This article was written with Chat-GPT

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## About the Author

### Prof. Dr. Elham Hassan Ahmed Ali

Professor of Physiology  
Faculty of Women for Arts, Science, and Education  
Ain Shams University

## Personal Information

**E-mail:** elhamhassan2006@yahoo.com, elham.ali@women.asu.edu.eg

**Orchid no:** 0000-0001-6573-154X

**Scopus ID:** 24334373200

**Google Scholar:** <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=9inu228AAAAJ&hl=en>

**Research Gate:** [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elham\\_Ali5](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elham_Ali5)

- **Degree of Bachelor:** Bachelor of Science (Zoology) – 1997 (Very Good with Honor) from Women Faculty for Arts, Science, and Education, Ain Shams University.
- **Degree of M.Sc.:** Date: 29/9/2002, Subject: Studies on Intestinal Parasitic Protozoa of Goats In Egypt.
- **Degree of Ph.D.:** Date: 7/6/2006, Subject: Physiological Studies on the Effect of DHEA and Cyproterone Acetate on Young and Senile Male Rats Fed on High Fat Diets.
- Accredited Trainer Since 28-1-2018.
- Publications: Co-author for more than thirty-eight articles.
- Supervisor of more than sixteen thesis projects.
- Referee work for more than 15 local and international scientific journals.
- Participated in a research project with the science faculty at Ain Shams University.
- Membership of three scientific associations.
- Attended more than thirty conferences.
- Participation in the preparation and writing of the exceptional program in the department (Applied Biological Sciences program).
- Participated in preparing many conferences, celebrations, exhibitions, and caravans.
- Member of the evaluation committee for promoting professors and associate professors in Zoology and Entomology at the Supreme Council of Universities.
- Department Coordinator in the Scientific Research Ethics Committee.
- Coordinator of the Applied Biological Sciences program.