Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Technology

Journal homepage: http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/IJERT/

The Dynamic Postgraduate Co-supervision of a Seasoned Statistics Professor and a Proficient Computer Science Lecturer

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ABSTRACT

This manuscript explores the dynamics of co-supervision in academic research between an over-60-year-old male professor with expertise in statistics, mathematics, port management, business management, and management consulting, and a 43-year-old female computer science lecturer with a strong background in computer techniques. The study examines the potential strengths and challenges of such a partnership in guiding postgraduate (PG) students in the field of computer science. Key strengths include the synergy between interdisciplinary knowledge, a balanced skill set, and the opportunity for a broader research scope. Challenges include generational and technological gaps, differences in methodology, time management, and communication barriers. The paper offers strategies to overcome these challenges and highlights the potential for innovative research outcomes, student skill development, and professional growth for both supervisors. The collaboration between the academics can serve as a model for interdisciplinary co-supervision, fostering a holistic approach to research and academic mentorship.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Submitted/Received 19 Mar 2025
First Revised 21 Apr 2025
Accepted 14 Jun 2025
First Available online 15 Jun 2025
Publication Date 01 Dec 2025

Keyword:
Academic mentorship,
Co-supervision,
Generational dynamics,
Interdisciplinary research,
Research collaboration.

1. INTRODUCTION

Newly qualified graduates are warned that the education they have earned is not their own, but the property of parents and guardians, and more for society. This guides us towards sharing knowledge and applying it in real-life situations. Because education expands and advances, when not used, it rusts. Once rusted, it is as good as not being there. Hence, the certificate earned is an unworthy paper and does not reflect knowledge. Expertise is restricted to technical skill, and knowledge restricts the experts in theory, while expansion to other disciplines enables application. Research publications that are hardcore to their fields also deprive people lay to the fields of the value of the publication, if it exists. Professor Mzo Sirayi advised that "your education should benefit you, and society". He also challenged academics to consider curricula development to lean towards improving a life situation, such as money generation, economic enhancement, and so on. He advocated multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, as they challenge mindsets and expand critical thinkers' vocabulary (Javed, 2024; Narsico, 2024; Shams, 2024). In the evolving landscape of higher education (HE), the concept of interdisciplinary and cross-generational co-supervision in research has gained prominence. This manuscript explores the potential dynamics between an over-60-year-old male professor, with extensive knowledge and experience in statistics and its applications, mathematics, port management, business management, tourism management, and management consulting, and a 43-year-old female computer science lecturer with extensive knowledge of computer techniques. The context of this co-supervision is set in the domain of computer science research, where their collective expertise intersects to guide graduate students toward novel solutions.

The partnership between the professor and the lecturer represents an intriguing case of combining established knowledge with contemporary technical prowess. The manuscript examined the strengths and weaknesses of their collaboration, highlighted the potential outcomes of such a co-supervision, and proposed strategies to mitigate challenges.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Multidisciplinarity

"Multidisciplinarity" refers to the approach or practice of integrating or combining knowledge, methods, and perspectives from different disciplines or fields of study to address a particular issue, problem, or research topic (Sardar, 2024). In a multidisciplinary approach, experts from various disciplines work alongside each other, often contributing their unique perspectives and expertise, but each typically works within their disciplinary boundaries. Unlike interdisciplinarity, which involves blending or synthesizing knowledge across disciplines (Markauskaite *et al*., 2024), multidisciplinarity tends to focus more on parallel contributions from different disciplines without necessarily merging their concepts or methods. For example, a team of researchers from the fields of biology, sociology, and economics might each study a complex social issue from their specific disciplinary lens, contributing distinct but complementary insights. In essence, multidisciplinarity promotes collaboration among different fields without the goal of creating new, integrated frameworks, but rather enhancing understanding by bringing together diverse expertise. The value of multidisciplinarity in research lies in its ability to provide a more comprehensive understanding of complex problems by integrating diverse perspectives and expertise. Several ways multidisciplinarity contributes to research are broader perspectives, complex problem-solving, innovation and creativity, improved collaboration, enhanced resource

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

utilization, real-world application, filling knowledge gaps, and bridging gaps between theory and practice (Markauskaite *et al*., 2024). These can be explained as follows:

(i) Broader Perspectives: Concerning this aspect, researchers from different disciplines bring unique viewpoints, concepts, and methodologies (Ahmed, 2024). Any single mindset, no matter how big, cannot deliver all the possibilities. As a result, the diversity from different disciplines can uncover novel angles and solutions to problems that might be missed when observed from the perspective of a single discipline.

(ii) Complex Problem-Solving: The world has many challenges that are complex and difficult to address from one angle. The world's most pressing challenges, such as HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, climate change, public health, and poverty, which are inherently complex, require knowledge from multiple fields, and this is where multidisciplinary research becomes relevant (Beaman, 2024; Cardoso *et al*., 2024; Nisa, 2024). Multidisciplinary research allows for a more holistic approach, where insights from various disciplines can address different facets of the problem.

(iii) Innovation and Creativity: Different backgrounds have a lot to offer when given a platform and an opportunity. Exposure to different disciplines can advance creativity and innovative thinking (Acar *et al*., 2024). Moreover, the intersection of diverse fields often leads to the development of new ideas, technologies, or methods that would not have emerged in a single-discipline environment (Michinov & Jeanson, 2023).

(iv) Improved Collaboration: Some researchers view multidisciplinarity-based research as a useful mechanism to bring ideas together, formally promoting, as they commend and recommend, collaboration and networking among researchers from different areas of expertise. This interaction often sparks dialogue and the sharing of new techniques, data, and theories, enriching the overall research process.

(v) Enhanced Resource Utilization: In multidisciplinary teams, researchers from different backgrounds can share resources such as data, infrastructure, and technologies. Some researchers (Korylchuk *et al*., 2024) view the pooling of resources as being beneficial in the optimization of research works that can yield the benefits of cost and time savings while adding value.

(vi) Real-World Application: Research in fields like public policy, environmental science, or healthcare expects the amalgamation of numerous disciplines to create actionable solutions (Holland *et al*., 2019). Multidisciplinarity ensures that research findings are more applicable to real-world issues, as they draw from a wide range of relevant knowledge (Mikki, 2024).

(vii) Filling Knowledge Gaps: Naturally, because of definitions, each discipline has its strengths and limitations. Researchers (Khorram-Manesh *et al*., 2024; Mazzocchi, 2019; Mesutoglu *et al*., 2024) and others regard multidisciplinarity as a useful aid in filling in the gaps existing in each of the distinct disciplines by incorporating expertise from other fields, leading to a more complete understanding of a research problem.

(viii) Bridging Gaps Between Theory and Practice: Again, as expected, different disciplines deal with different aspects of research in which theory and practice are used together as some disciplines are more theoretical while others are more practical (Brownlie *et al*., 2008; Obidovna, 2024). A multidisciplinary approach facilitates an effective bridge between theory and practical aspects. It demonstrates that multidisciplinarity makes research outcomes relevant to practical applications (Karamthulla *et al*., 2024).

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2.2. Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity refers to the integration and synthesis of concepts, methods, and insights from two or more disciplines to create new frameworks, approaches, or solutions. Unlike multidisciplinarity, where disciplines work in parallel without necessarily merging their approaches, interdisciplinarity involves blending and merging knowledge from different fields to address complex problems or questions in a more cohesive and unified manner. In an interdisciplinary approach, researchers or practitioners do not just apply separate disciplinary tools; instead, they collaborate to generate new insights, methodologies, or perspectives that transcend individual disciplines. This often leads to the creation of new fields or areas of study that draw on multiple disciplines. Key characteristics of interdisciplinarity include collaboration, problem-centredness, knowledge synthesis, and new knowledge creation (Markauskaite *et al*., 2024). For collaborating across disciplines (Tariq, 2024), among others, insinuated that experts from various fields work together, sharing their specific knowledge and methodologies, often leading to the development of new, integrated concepts. On problem-centeredness, interdisciplinary research is often motivated by complex, real-world problems that cannot be adequately addressed from the perspective of a single discipline. In the synthesis of knowledge, interdisciplinarity does not merely compound separate disciplinary contributions. They explain that, instead, interdisciplinarity blends ideas, theories, and methods to produce new insights and approaches that would not exist within the boundaries of a single discipline. With this emergence, we can experience the creation of new disciplines. Computer science, physics, and mathematics were once used in war games and later applied to actual wars, and then eventually led to the development of operations research (Omodan, 2024), which is now a respectable field on its own. Therefore, these new insights into interdisciplinary work can lead to the emergence of entirely new fields of study that draw on knowledge from multiple disciplines. Some researchers (Farooq, 2024; Hamid, 2024) echo these experiences by independently projecting new territories and outlining the impact of multidisciplinary research in emerging fields. Moreover, some reports (Dyachenko *et al*., 2024; Krauss, 2024) provide examples such as environmental science (combining biology, chemistry, and physics) or cognitive science (combining psychology, neuroscience, and computer science). The value of interdisciplinarity includes enhanced problem solving, innovation, and broader understanding (Khan, 2024; Qudsia, 2024). Concerning enhanced problem solving, interdisciplinary approaches enable intense, more inclusive solutions to complex challenges by drawing on an assorted range of expertise (Vienni-Baptista *et al*., 2022). The innovation value occurs through the blending of different disciplinary perspectives that promote creativity and lead to novel ideas or discoveries that are not possible within any single discipline. These also show that the lessons lead to a broader understanding for each role player. Interdisciplinarity allows researchers to address broader issues that span various fields, such as climate change, public health, or artificial intelligence (Abbonato *et al*., 2024; Ali, 2024).

2.3. Generational Dynamics in PG Co-Supervision

The generational dynamics of PG co-supervision involving an experienced professor and a younger female lecturer highlight the importance of academic mentorship, collaborative practices, and synergistic relationships. These elements enhance the supervisory experience while contributing to a more robust academic culture that benefits PG students. As HE continues to evolve, embracing diverse supervisory models is necessary in meeting the demands of an expanding PG landscape.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

2.3.1. Academic Mentorship

Academic mentorship plays a fundamental role in influencing and modelling supervisory relationships, especially in the modern, fast-evolving HE setting (Jordan *et al*., 2021). The traditional model of PG supervision often emphasizes a hierarchical structure, where knowledge flows predominantly from the supervisor to the student (Doğan & Arslan, 2024), especially because PG supervision in some countries and HE institutions is undertaken by a single supervisor. This setup translates into knowledge flow from the main supervisor, who is usually more senior, then the co-supervisor, who is usually junior, and then to the PG student. However, recent literature suggests a shift towards a more collective and reciprocal mentoring process (Wang *et al*., 2023). This transformation is particularly significant in co-supervision scenarios, where both the experienced professor and the younger lecturer bring unique perspectives and expertise to the table. Mutual learning and empowerment are common positive outcomes in PG co-supervision. Mutual learning in the co-supervision relationship space often occurs with both supervisors learning from each other (Okeke-Uzodike, 2021). The younger lecturer may offer fresh insights and contemporary methodologies, while the experienced professor provides depth of knowledge and institutional wisdom. Regarding empowerment, this mentorship dynamic empowers the younger lecturer (Okeke-Uzodike, 2021). The dynamic boosts the younger lecturer's confidence and professional identity as she navigates her role in guiding PG students.

2.3.2. Co-supervision

Due to the limited capacity in PG supervision, some PG students have to be supervised singly by one supervisor. In ideal HEIs, co-supervision is increasingly recognized as an effective model to address the growing demand for PG supervision (Karuri, 2023). The co-supervision model enables shared responsibilities and diverse expertise to significantly benefit students. When the diverse expertise manifests, they combine the strengths of the two supervisors involved. For example, the experienced professor can focus on theoretical frameworks, while the younger lecturer might emphasize innovative research techniques or contemporary issues relevant to students' studies. The supportive environment occurs when the co-supervision encourages open communication and collaboration among students (Mncina *et al*., 2024; Wald *et al*., 2023). Effective co-supervision enhances the supervisors' overall academic experience. Co-supervision helps mitigate challenges such as supervisor burnout by effectively distributing workload (Pyhältö *et al*., 2024).

2.3.3. Synergistic Relationship

Synergy is the phenomenon where two or more entities accomplish greater success or effectiveness when working together than they could individually (Chen *et al*., 2024). In the co-supervision in the spotlight, the synergistic relationship between an experienced professor and a younger female lecturer can lead to enhanced outcomes for both supervisors and students. The collaborative opportunities through their partnership can create opportunities for joint research projects, publications, and conference presentations. It will help to enrich the academic life of both supervisors. Enhanced supervision practices also ensue. The co-supervision relationship can encourage the development of more structured supervision practices that incorporate feedback mechanisms (Chugh *et al*., 2024). Feedback can improve student outcomes. The co-supervisors can collectively establish clear expectations and guidelines for their students. This is essential for effective supervision.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

3. METHODS

The research method employed in the study was qualitative, observational, and literature-supported. Qualitative observational research is a valuable methodological approach backed by extensive literature across various disciplines. In support, this method provides unique insights into human behaviour and social interactions by focusing on real-world contexts rather than controlled experimental settings.

Due to their vast academic and subject knowledge and experiences, the two co-supervisors bring complementary expertise that enhances the quality and depth of research supervision. Firstly, the professor, with a robust background in mathematics, statistics, port management, business management, and consulting, has made significant academic contributions, particularly in applying mathematical modelling to management, economics, and logistics. His extensive experience in port management and strategic consulting equips him with a strong foundation for tackling complex real-world problems, offering deep insights into quantitative analysis, systems thinking, and large-scale project management. Secondly, in contrast, the lecturer specializes in computer science, particularly in information science. With a solid academic track record in the basics of computer science, she is proficient at using contemporary computational tools to address modern technical challenges. Her expertise and experience complement the professor's theoretical and conceptual strengths, offering practical solutions that integrate cutting-edge technologies. The supervisory team, together as a collective, provides a balanced approach to co-supervision. The two combine rigorous quantitative methods with innovative, hands-on computational techniques. This setting ensures a well-rounded and forward-thinking approach to the research.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section explains the potential strengths and weaknesses of co-supervision involving complementary expertise. It shows how collaboration advances interdisciplinary synergy, offering students a balanced skill set and a broad scope of research opportunities. The section also considers the challenges that may arise from generational gaps, differing methodologies, and communication barriers, along with strategies to overcome them. It highlights the promising outcomes of successful co-supervision, including innovative research projects, enhanced student skill development, and professional growth for both co-supervisors.

4.1. Potential Strengths of the Co-Supervision

The study demonstrated Interdisciplinary synergy, balanced skill set, broad research scope, and mentoring across generations. These were shown as follows.

(i) Interdisciplinary Synergy: The study revealed that the combination of the professor's analytical, business-oriented mindset with the lecturer's cutting-edge computational knowledge creates an environment strong for interdisciplinary innovation. Together, they can guide students to develop research that employs advanced algorithms and accounts for entrepreneurial and operational complexities. A potential research project might involve using mathematical models to optimize supply chains, where the professor provides insight into logistics and the lecturer offers expertise in AI-driven optimization algorithms.

(ii) Balanced Skill Set: The proficiency of the professor in statistical modelling and strategic management complements the lecturer's deep technical expertise in computer science. This equilibrium ensures that students receive guidance in both the theoretical

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

underpinnings and practical implementation of their research. It prepares them for both academia and industry.

(iii) Broad Research Scope: With such diverse expertise, the co-supervisors can resolve a broad range of research topics. The professor could contribute his knowledge on the application of statistical methods, while the lecturer could guide the technical aspects of computing systems required to solve those problems.

(iv) Mentoring Across Generations: The professor's years of experience enable him to offer valuable mentoring on broader life and career decisions, while the lecturer's position as a younger academic may facilitate more relatable mentorship in the fast-evolving field of computer science. This generational balance may also create a productive environment for students to learn both from experienced professionals and those closer to their stage in career development.

4.2. Potential Weaknesses and Solutions

Weaknesses that may emerge in this joint supervision venture include generational and technological gaps, differences in methodology, time management and coordination, and potential communication barriers. They manifest as follows.

(i) Generational and Technological Gaps: A challenge may emerge due to the professor's extensive experience, as he may sometimes overlook the fast pace of technological evolution. This could lead to a disconnect with the lecturer, who may be up to date with the latest trends and technologies. To prevent this, frequent discussions on emerging technologies and their potential applications are necessary. The lecturer may present new developments to the professor, who may then share how such advancements could be applied in real-life contexts.

(ii) Differences in Methodology: A challenge may be the professor's background, which may lead to a more traditional, rigorous approach to problem-solving, while the lecturer's background might incline her toward cutting-edge algorithms or computationally intensive solutions. This may cause disagreements on which methodology is most appropriate for a given problem. Addressing this problem requires the establishment of a clear framework for collaboration. The co-supervisors could define clear roles and expectations for each project stage. For instance, the professor could focus on the overarching system or business model, while the lecturer could handle the computational methods and their application. Joint discussions could ensure the methodologies complement each other.

(iii) Time Management and Coordination: Given their varied backgrounds and likely different approaches to time management and project execution, coordination could be a challenge. The professor may be accustomed to longer, more strategic timelines, whereas the lecturer may operate in a more agile, rapid-paced academic setting. This may be addressed using a shared project timeline and regular meetings to help harmonize efforts. Setting milestones and clear deliverables would create accountability. They should ensure that the pace of research aligns with both co-supervisors' expectations. Additionally, the use of project management tools should help to track progress and tasks efficiently.

(iv) Potential Communication Barriers: A problem may arise with the professor's extensive use of business jargon and managerial concepts that might clash with the more technical lexicon used by the lecturer. This may cause misunderstandings. However, the problem may be managed using clear communication protocols and an understanding that both

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

co-supervisors should step outside their comfort zones to explain concepts in simpler terms to improve clarity.

4.3. Likely Opportunities

This section discusses outcomes that could emerge from successful PG co-supervision. Three key prospects are innovative research projects, student skill development, and professional growth for both co-supervisors. They are discussed below:

(i) Innovative Research Projects: The collaboration could lead to the development of research projects that bring together business problem-solving techniques and computational advancements. For example, optimizing port logistics using machine learning algorithms or improving business decision-making processes through data analysis and predictive models could become the hallmark of their joint supervision.

(ii) Student Skill Development: Students mentored by this supervisory team may acquire a broad range of skills. PG students would learn to approach problems from both perspectives, which positions them as well-rounded researchers capable of navigating diverse challenges. The integration of business management principles into technical research could also prepare students for leadership roles in industry.

(iii) Professional growth for both supervisors: The experience of co-supervising across disciplines and generations may be mutually enriching. The professor may become more attuned to emerging technologies, while the lecturer could gain a deeper understanding of how to apply computational methods to larger business or societal problems. This professional growth could manifest in publications, new collaborations, and a more comprehensive understanding of their respective fields.

4.4. DISCUSSION

The co-supervision arrangement between the professor and lecturer presents both strengths and challenges. The integration of diverse expertise fosters an innovative research environment, while addressing the weaknesses through clear communication, role definition, and structured time management can ensure success. The potential outcomes, including innovative research projects, skill development, and professional growth, make this collaboration a promising model for academic mentorship.

4.4.1. Potential Strengths of the Co-Supervision

Notable strengths in supervision are interdisciplinary synergy, balanced skill set, broad research scope, and mentoring across generations. They are clarified below.

(i) One strength is interdisciplinary synergy: The study demonstrates the value of combining different areas of expertise for interdisciplinary innovation. The synergy between the professor's business-focused approach and the lecturer's technical proficiency creates a rich environment for students to engage in research that combines advanced computational techniques with practical business applications. This approach offers students the ability to tackle complex problems that require cross-disciplinary thinking and mentoring across generations (Rambe, 2024).

(ii) Balanced Skill Set: The complementary nature of the professor's and lecturer's skills ensures that students receive both theoretical depth and practical guidance. The professor's expertise and experience may be paired with the lecturer's technical expertise. This balanced skill *set a*llows students to approach problems from multiple angles. They can therefore become well-rounded researchers.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

(iii) Broad Research Scope: The study highlights the way the combined knowledge of the two co-supervisors expands the range of research topics that can be addressed. With the professor's strength in statistical methods and the lecturer's proficiency in computing systems, the team can address a wide array of research areas. Emerging research may range from data science applications to advanced modelling techniques. This breadth enables them to support students working on a variety of complex problems across disciplines (Kálmán *et al*., 2022).

(iv) Mentoring Across Generations: The generational dynamic between the professor and the lecturer creates a mentoring environment that bridges the gap between experience and modern trends. The professor's extensive experience allows for mentorship on life and career decisions, while the younger lecturer, who is closer to the early stages of their career, provides guidance that aligns with current trends in technology and research. This dual mentorship allows students to gain insights from both seasoned professionals and those who are navigating the current academic landscape.

4.4.2. Potential Weaknesses and Solutions

Several points are described in the following:

(i) Generational and Technological Gaps: One major challenge identified in the study is the potential disconnect caused by the generational and technological differences between the professor and lecturer (Mpofu & Madlela, 2024). The professor's long experience may occasionally overlook newer technologies or fast-evolving trends, creating a gap between the two supervisors' perspectives (Ndjuluwa *et al*., 2024). To address this, the study suggests that the lecturer could share emerging trends and technologies with the professor, facilitating a two-way learning process. This collaboration helps ensure that both co-supervisors stay up to date and that students benefit from the latest advancements.

(ii) Differences in Methodology: The differences in methodology between the professor's more traditional, business-oriented approach and the lecturer's focus on cutting-edge computational methods could lead to disagreements on how to tackle certain problems (Almlöv & Grubbström, 2024). The study proposes a solution where each co-supervisor takes responsibility for different aspects of a project. For example, the professor could handle the strategic, system-level issues, while the lecturer manages the technical, algorithmic components. Joint discussions would then help ensure that the methodologies complement each other, creating a holistic approach to problem-solving (Wittek *et al*., 2024).

(iii) Time Management and Coordination: Given their distinct backgrounds, the two co-supervisors may have different approaches to managing time and coordinating research projects (Wald *et al*., 2023). The professor may prefer a slower, more strategic approach, while the lecturer may be accustomed to a faster-paced, more agile methodology. To address this, the study recommends establishing a clear project timeline with milestones, deliverables, and regular meetings. The use of project management tools to track progress can also enhance coordination, ensuring that both co-supervisors remain aligned in terms of expectations and work pace.

(iv) Potential Communication Barriers: Communication challenges may arise due to differences in terminology and language (Castelló *et al*., 2023). These differences could cause misunderstandings. However, the study suggests that both co-supervisors try to clarify their ideas and explain concepts in simpler terms, creating a mutual

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

understanding. Setting communication protocols and agreeing on a shared vocabulary can help alleviate these potential issues.

4.4.3. Likely Opportunities

Several points are described in the following:

(i) Innovative Research Projects: The collaboration between the professor and lecturer presents significant opportunities for groundbreaking research that merges business problem-solving with computational advancements. The study offers examples such as optimizing port logistics using machine learning algorithms or using data analysis to improve business decision-making. Such research projects are likely to push the boundaries of both fields, offering students a chance to work on innovative, real-world problems.

(ii) Student Skill Development: Students under the co-supervision of this team are likely to gain a wide range of skills that prepare them for diverse career paths. They will be exposed to both business management principles and advanced technical skills, allowing them to approach research challenges from multiple angles. This holistic skill set positions students as versatile researchers who can thrive in both academic and industry environments, particularly in leadership roles.

(iii) Professional Growth for Both Supervisors: The co-supervision arrangement offers mutual professional growth. The professor can expand their understanding of emerging technologies, while the lecturer gains a deeper appreciation of how to apply computational methods to larger business or societal issues. This professional development may lead to new collaborations, publications, and a broader perspective on their respective fields. The experience also enhances their capacity to mentor students, further enriching the academic environment.

4.5. Implications for Practice and Recommendations

Implications for practice are in the following:

(i) Interdisciplinary Collaboration as a Strategic Approach: The study's findings underscore the potential for significant benefits when faculty from different disciplines collaborate in postgraduate supervision. Such collaborations foster interdisciplinary innovation and broaden the scope of research projects. This approach aligns with the growing need for researchers to tackle complex, multifaceted problems that span traditional academic boundaries. In practice, universities and research institutions should encourage and facilitate cross-departmental partnerships to enhance the academic experience for postgraduate students and generate impactful research outcomes.

(ii) Balanced Skill Development for Students: The balanced skill set of the co-supervisors allows students to gain expertise in both theoretical and practical aspects of their research. This creates a more well-rounded graduate, prepared for a variety of roles in both academia and industry. Institutions should consider the integration of interdisciplinary supervisory teams as a standard practice for student development, ensuring students are equipped with a comprehensive skill set. This will enhance their employability and adaptability in a rapidly evolving job market.

(iii) Dynamic Mentoring Across Generations: The generational balance between the professor and the lecturer offers a unique form of mentorship that bridges the wisdom of experience with the relevance of modern technological advancements. For institutions, this implies the value of fostering mentorship programs that combine experienced academics with younger scholars who are more in tune with current

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

research trends. This can create a dynamic mentorship culture where students benefit from diverse perspectives and advice, helping them navigate both traditional career paths and emerging fields.

(iv) Adaptability in Methodological Approaches: Differences in methodological approaches between co-supervisors can be seen as an opportunity for students to learn flexibility and adaptability in their research. The ability to navigate contrasting methods, such as traditional business analysis versus cutting-edge computational techniques, can be an invaluable skill for students. Practically, this calls for the development of frameworks for students to engage with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, allowing them to choose the most effective approaches for their research while learning to synthesize multiple perspectives.

(v) Effective Time Management and Coordination Tools: The study highlights potential time management and coordination challenges due to the distinct work styles of the co-supervisors. For institutions, this suggests a need to provide training in project management tools and techniques for both students and supervisors. Implementing shared timelines, clear deliverables, and regular check-ins can improve project flow and ensure that both the academic and operational aspects of research are effectively managed. This can be further facilitated by the use of digital tools to track progress, manage deadlines, and foster communication between supervisors and students.

(vi) Addressing Communication Barriers in Multidisciplinary Teams: The potential for communication breakdowns due to differences in disciplinary jargon points to the importance of promoting effective communication strategies within interdisciplinary teams. Universities and academic bodies should develop workshops or support systems for supervisors to improve their ability to communicate across disciplines. Clear communication protocols and a shared understanding of terminology can help minimize misunderstandings, making interdisciplinary collaborations more efficient and productive.

Recommendations are in the following:

(i) Encourage Interdisciplinary Supervisory Teams: Institutions should foster a culture that supports and encourages interdisciplinary collaborations in postgraduate research. They can facilitate these partnerships by offering incentives such as funding for joint research initiatives, professional development opportunities for co-supervisors, and administrative support for managing dual-supervision projects. By promoting interdisciplinary supervision, universities can produce graduates with more comprehensive skill sets and broader research perspectives.

(ii) Provide Training on Collaborative Supervision: Given the unique challenges that arise from co-supervision across disciplines and generations, universities should offer training programs for faculty on effective collaborative supervision. This training could focus on conflict resolution, time management strategies, and the effective integration of different methodologies. By equipping supervisors with these skills, institutions ensure that interdisciplinary collaborations can function smoothly and efficiently.

(iii) Integrate Technological Advancements into Traditional Research Approaches: To bridge the technological and generational gaps highlighted in the study, universities should create opportunities for senior faculty members to engage with emerging technologies and computational techniques. This could be achieved through internal seminars, workshops, or collaborative projects with younger scholars or industry experts. Such initiatives would ensure that senior faculty stay updated on recent advancements and that students receive up-to-date mentorship across a broad range of disciplines.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

(iv) Foster Clear Communication Protocols: Institutions should promote a culture of clear and open communication within multidisciplinary research teams. Supervisors should agree on common terminologies and establish shared expectations for communication from the outset. Workshops on effective interdisciplinary communication could be offered to help bridge gaps between disciplines, ensuring that jargon does not impede understanding and collaboration.

(v) Use Project Management Tools for Research Projects: To mitigate time management and coordination challenges, it is recommended that both co-supervisors and students use project management tools to track research progress. These tools can help clarify timelines, deliverables, and responsibilities, ensuring that both co-supervisors are aligned on research goals. Universities should provide access to such tools and offer training on their use to both students and faculty, making project tracking and coordination more streamlined.

(vi) Support a Flexible Research Framework: Given the diverse methodologies applied by the co-supervisors, institutions should establish flexible research frameworks that allow students to navigate both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This framework should encourage students to critically evaluate different methodologies and choose the most appropriate one for their research problem. Encouraging students to be adaptable and to combine methods from different fields can better prepare them for interdisciplinary work.

5. CONCLUSION

The co-supervision of a senior male professor with a robust background in statistics, business, and management, alongside a dynamic 43-year-old female lecturer specializing in computer science and its related subfields, presents a unique opportunity for advancing innovative research and promoting academic growth. This collaboration leverages their diverse strengths and addresses potential weaknesses, creating a synergistic model for interdisciplinary research that can inspire others in the academic community. The blend of modern academic insights with the seasoned experience of an established professor can lead to groundbreaking research initiatives, as the female lecturer's familiarity with contemporary technological advancements complements the male professor's extensive knowledge of traditional business frameworks and statistical analysis. Moreover, gender balance within this partnership is crucial for adopting an inclusive environment that encourages diverse viewpoints, serving as a powerful example for students and colleagues alike. Their shared passion for educating students will drive them to design innovative research projects that actively engage learners, while their focus on common interests, such as data analytics in business or the application of computer science in management, can create interdisciplinary projects that resonate with students. Openness in information sharing will further enhance their collaboration by nurturing an environment where both academics feel comfortable exchanging ideas, resources, and feedback, thus encouraging intellectual curiosity and exploration of new avenues of inquiry. Additionally, the intersection of statistics, business management, and computer science creates fertile ground for interdisciplinary exploration. Their complementary subjects allow for innovative approaches to research questions that require multifaceted solutions. Hence, this collaboration has the potential to produce valuable outcomes for their students and for the broader academic community by setting a precedent for effective interdisciplinary partnerships that enhance academic inquiry and contribute to the development of well-rounded graduates equipped to tackle the challenges of tomorrow's world.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10. 17509/xxxx.xxxx
p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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p- ISSN 2775-8419 e- ISSN 2775-8427