Research Outside Universities in Nepal: Need, Opportunities and Challenges of Multidisciplinary Collaborative Research and Innovation

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Abstract:

First part of my talk (around 15 mins) will provide overview of some research in cutting edge technology, primarily AI, that are highly relevant to the countries like Nepal and why we need more people working in this domain. The underlying theme in the examples I show will be multidisciplinary research. After showing some examples of our work that are applied in health care, I will present some potential research directions that I believe are exciting opportunities to understand ourselves better and needs strong involvement of people working in the fields such as social/political science, ethics, anthropology and economics.

Second part of my talk will focus on two aspects that I believe are important in the current context of doing research outside universities in Nepal: i. Forms of collaborations needed among existing research institutes ii. Discussion on challenges of creating sustainable models for research organizations without losing the primary character of being fundamentally a research institute rather than a consulting/training firm or report writing NGOs.

About the Speaker:

Bishesh Khanal is a research scientist and chairperson of NAAMII, a recently established research institute in Nepal focusing on informatics, AI and applied mathematics. He is also a senior AI scientist at Fusemachines. After completing his PhD from INRIA, Sophia Antipolis, France and Post-doctoral research at King's College London and Imperial College London, he moved back to Nepal in January 2019. His key areas of interest include visual perception, machine learning and AI with special interest in applying them to identify problems relevant to low income countries and help develop innovative solutions, particularly in the field of medicine. He believes that the advancement in computational science and AI has provided a unique opportunity for resource constrained countries to explore exciting avenues of research by just using some computers and quality manpower.