India ranks third in research papers on artificial intelligence

New analysis tracks publications in peer-reviewed journals
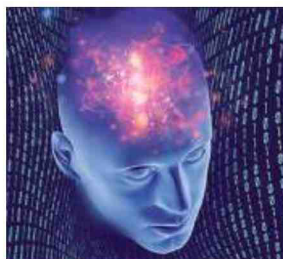
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India ranks third in the world in terms of high quality research publications in artificial intelligence (AI) but is at a significant distance from world leader China, according to an analysis by research agency Itihaasa, which was founded by Kris Gopalakrishnan, former CEO and co-founder of Infosys.

The agency computed the number of 'citable documents'– the number of research publications in peer-reviewed journals – in the field of AI between 2013-2017 as listed out by Scimago, a compendium that tracks trends in scientific research publications.

China stands first

India, while third in the world with 12,135 documents, trailed behind China with 37, 918 documents and the United States with 32,421 documents.

However, when parsed by another metric 'citations'– or the number of times an article is referenced – India ranked only fifth and trailed the United Kingdom, Canada, the U.S. and China. "This suggests that India must work at improving the quality of its research output in AI," said Dayasindhu N., one of the authors of the report 'Landscape of AI/ML (Machine Learning) Research In India'.

Given India's traditional strength in information technology and AI said to pose a transformation in industry and academic circles, the report was an attempt at mapping the state of AI-based research in India.

There were only about 50 to 75 principal researchers in the AI-space in India and they were tended to collaborate with each other. The Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Information Technology were among the key centres for AI research.

The report authors interviewed 25 AI researchers across the country, who said that as of now "...there was adequate support and funding from the government and industry for AI research."

Healthcare, financial services, monsoon forecasting, retail and education were the key fields likely to benefit from AI and the field was "unlikely to lead" to a destruction of jobs – a key global concern regarding the field.

India's national think-tank, the NITI Ayog, last June released a discussion paper on the transformative potential of AI in India that said the country could add $1 trillion to its economy through integrating AI into its economy.