

NITheCS COLLOQUIUM:

Machine Learning Research Initiatives and Contributions from Africa: A Three-Decade Retrospective

Prof Absalom Ezugwu (North-West University)

Monday, 4 September 2023 | 16h00 – 17h00 SAST

Venue: in person* and online

* *Neelsie Cinema, Stellenbosch University*

--- Cheese and wine will be served at the venue ---

ABSTRACT

In the last three decades, Africa has emerged as a pivotal hub for pioneering machine learning research and innovation, contributing significantly to the global landscape of artificial intelligence and its related subfields. This agile retrospective discussion will look into some of the diverse and impactful initiatives undertaken by African researchers, institutions and organisations in the realm of machine learning. In this talk, we will examine some of the key milestones, breakthroughs and influential projects that have propelled Africa's role in shaping the field of machine learning. Through an extensive analysis of the continent's contributions, this retrospective will shed light on the transformation of African machine learning research and its potential for future developments.

BIOGRAPHY

Absalom El-Shamir Ezugwu is a Professor of Computer Science at North-West University, where he leads the computational intelligence research group. His research focus revolves around optimization, machine learning, swarm intelligence and nature-inspired algorithms. Prof Ezugwu has authored several papers in reputable journals and conferences. He has gained recognition for his novel contributions to nature-inspired AI techniques, including the development of innovative algorithms such as the Dwarf Mongoose Optimization Algorithm, Ebola Optimization Search Algorithm, Prairie Dog Optimization Algorithm, and Gazelle Optimization Algorithm. Beyond his academic achievements, Prof Ezugwu is a fervent advocate for leveraging AI to tackle real-world challenges. His passion lies in using AI to address some of Africa's most pressing issues, such as poverty alleviation, education enhancement, quality healthcare delivery, food security and climate change mitigation. Through his research and dedication, Prof Ezugwu strives to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of AI applications for the betterment of society in Africa and beyond.



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