RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Comparative Study of *Journal Finder* (JF) Systems' Effectiveness in Fulfilling Authors' Submission Requirements: Evidence from Elsevier, Sage, Brill, Springer, Taylor & Francis, MDPI, Wiley, and other Platforms

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Abstract

Research is a fundamental activity for faculty members, doctoral scholars, and undergraduate/postgraduate students, as well as a critical component in various university and institutional accreditation processes. To support the research community, many publishers have introduced Journal Finder services. This study evaluates the performance of selected Journal Finder platforms by using a predefined set of keywords from the information technology and data science domain to determine which service provides the most suitable journal recommendations. The chosen thematic focus, "distributed incremental clustering," belongs to broader fields such as machine learning, data mining, artificial intelligence, and computer engineering. Consequently, the findings are expected to benefit researchers working within this specific domain and related disciplines by offering a targeted list of relevant journals and their associated publication details, enabling quicker and more informed journal selection.

The analysis demonstrates how Journal Finder tools can be used effectively by researchers who possess a preliminary article title, an abstract draft, and a set of keywords. In this context, we propose the term

JournoMetrics to describe a consolidated approach for evaluating and comparing these services. Such a framework not only supports the identification of suitable journals but also addresses factors such as review timelines, acceptance rates, and thematic relevance, which are often decisive in journal selection.

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1. Introduction

Building upon established scholarly assessment methodologies such as bibliometrics, scientometrics, and altmetrics, this study introduces **JournoMetrics**—a consolidated framework for analyzing and optimizing the process of journal selection using multiple *Journal Finder* services. These services, offered by leading publishers and platforms, assist researchers in identifying appropriate journals based on inputs such as article title, abstract, and keywords. Notably, many of these services are freely available and are specifically tailored to assist authors in efficiently matching their work with suitable publication outlets.

A key advantage of *Journal Finder* tools is their ability to combine multiple metadata elements—title, abstract, and keywords—to generate relevant journal suggestions. This allows researchers, particularly those in the early stages of manuscript preparation, to explore potential publication venues even before the paper is fully written. Moreover, JournoMetrics can be especially valuable for authors seeking journals with shorter review cycles or known acceptance rates, enabling strategic publication planning under time constraints (Balabanovich, 1997, et al.).

In this paper, we examine and compare the functionalities, coverage, and unique features of a diverse set of *Journal Finder* platforms. Our analysis encompasses the following:

1. **Elsevier:** Journal Finder (title, abstract, and keywords)
2. **Springer:** Journal Suggester (title, abstract, and subject area)
3. **Wiley:** Journal Finder (title and abstract)
4. **Enago:** Journal Finder (abstract)
5. **ResearchGate:** Search based on publication, researcher, or question (no dedicated name)
6. **SAGE:** Journal Selector (keywords, journal name, publisher, ISSN, etc.)
7. **IEEE:** Publication Recommender (keywords/phrases or title)
8. **Taylor & Francis:** Journal Suggester (abstract)
9. **Pubmender:** Suggests PubMed journals (abstract)
10. **EndNote Match:** Suggests journals from the Web of Science Core Collection (title and abstract)
11. **Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ):** Standard features with additional filters (publisher's country, full-text language, formats)
12. **DBLP:** Identifies journals with publisher and year
13. **Jurn:** Sorts results by title, date, and relevance

By integrating these services into a unified comparative framework, JournoMetrics aims to streamline the journal selection process and enhance the efficiency of scholarly communication (Bornman, 2015, et al.).

Elsevier Journal Finder System

Elsevier B.V. is among the world's foremost commercial publishers in the scientific, technical, and medical (STM) domains. Its portfolio encompasses over 2,800 peer-reviewed journals and more than 40,000 academic books, along with numerous high-value databases and digital platforms. Elsevier journals are home to cutting-edge research, spanning disciplines from advanced medical innovations to breakthroughs in engineering and emerging technologies. The company's publications serve a global community of authors — from early-career researchers to Nobel laureates — and are trusted by institutions, policymakers, and industry leaders worldwide (Kulkarni, 2009, et.al.).

History and Evolution

Founded in 1880 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Elsevier derives its name from the renowned Elzevir family of Dutch publishers active in the 16th–17th centuries. Initially established as a book publisher, Elsevier began specializing in scientific and technical literature in the 20th century. Between the 1940s and 1980s, it significantly expanded its journal portfolio and entered international markets.

The 1990s marked a pivotal transition to digital publishing, most notably with the launch of the **ScienceDirect** platform in 1997. In 2004, Elsevier introduced **Scopus**, now the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature. Since 2010, the company has advanced open access publishing, integrated artificial intelligence tools, and launched innovative services such as **Mendeley Data** and the **Elsevier Journal Finder** (www.elsevier.com).

Flagship Journals

Elsevier publishes many high-impact titles across multiple disciplines, including:

- *The Lancet* – one of the most influential medical journals globally.
- *Cell* – a leading life sciences journal with a high impact factor.
- *Current Biology*, *Physics Reports*, *Applied Energy* – prominent journals in biological, physical, and engineering sciences (www.sciencedirect.com).

Databases and Online Platforms

- **ScienceDirect** – repository of millions of full-text scientific articles.
- **Scopus** – the world's most comprehensive bibliometric and citation database.
- **Mendeley** – reference management and researcher collaboration platform.
- **ClinicalKey** – evidence-based clinical resource for healthcare professionals.
- **Embase** – biomedical and pharmacological literature database.

Research Tools and Services

- **Elsevier Journal Finder** – AI-powered tool for identifying suitable journals for manuscript submission (www.journalfinder.elsevier.com).
- **Pure** – research information and management system.
- **SciVal** – analytics platform for evaluating and benchmarking research performance.

Role in the Scientific Ecosystem. Elsevier plays a critical role in disseminating scientific knowledge, particularly in medicine, engineering, and the life sciences. Through **Scopus**, it provides robust bibliometric indicators for evaluating research impact at the individual, institutional, and national levels (Kulkarni, 2009, et al.). Its platforms help set data standards used in research assessment, funding allocation, and policy formulation.

Open Access Commitment. Elsevier publishes over 600 fully open access (Gold OA) journals and offers hybrid open access options in most subscription journals through Article Processing Charges (APCs). The company supports open science initiatives, including partial integration with **Plan S**, and continues to expand its open access portfolio (Han, 2022, et.al.).

The **Elsevier Journal Finder** (also referred to as *Elsevier® JournalFinder* or *Elsevier® JournalFinder powered by Elsevier Fingerprint Engine™*) is an advanced online tool designed to assist authors in identifying the most suitable academic journals for their manuscripts.

Purpose of Journal Finder (JF) System of Elsevier

The primary function of this system is to recommend the most appropriate journals from Elsevier's portfolio of over 2,800 titles based on the manuscript's topic, title, and abstract. By doing so, it enables authors to:

- Identify journals with a suitable scope and impact factor.
- Minimize the risk of submitting to an inappropriate journal.
- Streamline and potentially shorten the publication process.

2. How It Works JF

- **Input:** Authors provide the manuscript's title, abstract, and optional keywords.
- **Analysis:** Using the proprietary *Elsevier Fingerprint Engine™* technology, the system conducts a semantic analysis of the content.
- **Matching:** The content is compared against journal scope statements, recent publications, and relevant subject tags.
- **Results:** A ranked list of recommended journals is generated, including details such as:
  - Journal name and scope
  - Annual publication volume
  - Acceptance rate (if available)
  - Average review time
  - Bibliometric indicators (e.g., Impact Factor, CiteScore)

3. Advantages

- **Targeted recommendations:** Improves the likelihood of matching the manuscript to the correct journal scope.
- **Efficiency:** Produces suggestions within seconds, eliminating the need to manually review numerous journals.
- **Accuracy:** Draws on up-to-date data from Elsevier's databases, including *Scopus* and *ScienceDirect*.

4. Limitations

- Recommendations are limited to Elsevier journals; titles from other publishers are excluded.
- The AI-generated list is advisory, and authors should independently verify the scope, readership, and policies of shortlisted journals.
- For highly specialized topics, the system's suggestions may be broad in scope. Official acces (www.elsevier.com)

Table 1. Summary of journal finder services evaluated for the "distributed incremental clustering" domain.

SR. No.	Publisher / Service	No. of Journals Suggested	Score Range for Selection	Features Included / "Sort by" Options	Relevance for Target Keywords	Top Suggested Journals
1	**Elsevier – Journal Finder**	50	3 to 1	Best match; journal name; CiteScore; impact factor; acceptance rate; time to first decision; time to publication; recent articles; journal website; direct submission option	Yes – first 6 listed journals score 3–2 with strong title match	*Big Data Research*; *Applied Soft Computing*; *Expert Systems with Applications*; *Information Sciences*; *Engineering Applications of Artificial Intelligence*
2	**Springer – Journal Suggester**	20	NA	Impact factor (limited coverage); average time to first decision; acceptance rate; journal name; journal website link	Yes – several journals offer quick review and high acceptance rate	*Journal of Big Data*; *Evolving Systems*; *Applied Intelligence*; *Evolutionary Intelligence*; *Cluster Computing*
3	**Wiley – Journal Finder**	12	3 to 1 (relevance)	Journal name; editor; impact factor; ISI ranking; open access; relevance score; direct submission link	No – very few relevant journals retrieved	*Quality and Reliability Engineering International*; *Statistical Analysis and Data Mining*; *Concurrency and Computation: Practice and Experience*
4	**Enago – Journal Finder**	5	NA	Journal name; publisher; peer	Yes – 4 out of 5 journals highly	*Algorithms*; *PLOS ONE*; *Journal of Big*

				review type; subject area; confidence index; publication speed (weeks); APC	relevant	*Data*; *International Journal of Computational Intelligence Systems*; *Sensors*
5	**Taylor & Francis – Journal Suggester**	9	NA	Journal name and description; open access; journal link	No – only one suitable journal	*Applied Artificial Intelligence*
6	**SAGE – Journal Selector**	15	NA	Journal name and description; journal link; impact factor; SCI-E details	Yes – 2 relevant journals, with others useful in niche areas	*International Journal of Distributed Sensor Networks*; *AERA Open*
7	**IEEE – Publication Recommender**	6	NA	Journal name; journal link; impact factor; open access details; download results; email results; submission-to-publication time (weeks)	Partially – journals are interdisciplinary with strong distributed focus	*IEEE Transactions on Neural Networks and Learning Systems*; *IEEE Transactions on Fuzzy Systems*; *IEEE Computational Social Systems*; *IEEE Intelligent Transportation Systems*; *IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Vehicles*; *IEEE Intelligent Transportation Systems Magazine*
8	**EndNote – Manuscript Matcher**	30	0.21 to 0.16	Journal name; publisher; ISSN/eISSN; categories; Web of Science Core Collection coverage; match score; profile page link	Yes – limited number of highly relevant journals	*IEEE Access*; *Sensors*; *Energies*; *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*; *IEEE Communications Letters*; *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*; *Soft Computing*; *Sustainability*
9	**Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)**	4	0.37 to 0.13	Journal title; ISSN; publisher; LCC subject category;	Yes – 2 out of 4 journals relevant	*Symmetry*; *International Journal of Networked and Distributed*

				publisher country; full-text language; available formats		*Computing*
10	**DBLP**	2	NA	Publisher name; year of publication	Partially – outputs are from conferences	*Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence and Applications*; *IOS Press E-book*
11	**Jurn**	2	NA	Publication title; sorted by date or relevance	No – unsuitable results (one thesis, one journal article)	*Bulletin of Surveying and Mapping*

Note:
Table 1 summarises the number of journals retrieved, scoring ranges, sorting features, keyword relevance, and exemplary top titles for each *Journal Finder* service examined. This evaluation focuses on the "distributed incremental clustering" domain, with consideration given to broader allied fields such as machine learning, data mining, artificial intelligence, and computer engineering. In Section 4, detailed metrics for these journals—including individual match scores, estimated time to publication, acceptance rates, and impact factors—are presented (Lao, 2010, et al.).

Table 2
List of journals retrieved from various *Journal Finder* services with key selection parameters.

SR. No.	Journal Name	Publisher	Match / Relevance Score	Time to Publication (weeks / days)	Time to First Decision (weeks / days)	Acceptance Rate (%)	Impact Factor
1	*Big Data Research*	Elsevier	3.00	19 weeks	13 weeks	5	2.952
2	*Applied Soft Computing*	Elsevier	3.00	4 weeks	8 weeks	17	4.473
3	*Expert Systems with Applications*	Elsevier	3.00	2 weeks	5 weeks	13	4.292
4	*Information Sciences*	Elsevier	3.00	7 weeks	7 weeks	22	5.524
5	*Engineering Applications of Artificial Intelligence*	Elsevier	3.00	3 weeks	7 weeks	10	3.526
6	*Journal of Big Data*	Springer	–	–	27 days	40	–

7	*Evolving Systems*	Springer	–	–	77 days	31	–
8	*Applied Intelligence*	Springer	–	–	18 days	14	–
9	*Evolutionary Intelligence*	Springer	–	–	34 days	22	–
10	*Cluster Computing*	Springer	–	–	48 days	30	–
11	*Quality and Reliability Engineering International*	Wiley	Relevance score 3.00	–	–	–	1.604
12	*Statistical Analysis and Data Mining*	Wiley	3.00	–	–	–	0.865
13	*Concurrency and Computation: Practice and Experience*	Wiley	3.00	–	–	–	1.114
14	*Algorithms*	Enago	Confidence index 26.74%	–	11 weeks	–	–
15	*PLOS ONE*	Enago	Confidence index 25.04%	–	24 weeks	–	–
16	*Journal of Big Data*	Enago	Confidence index 23.42%	–	13 weeks	–	–
17	*International Journal of Computational Intelligence Systems*	Enago	Confidence index 26.75%	–	22 weeks	–	–
18	*Applied Artificial Intelligence*	Taylor & Francis	–	–	–	–	–
19	*International Journal of Distributed Sensor Networks*	Edanz	–	–	–	Medium	–
20	*AERA Open*	Edanz	–	–	–	Lowest	–

21	*IEEE Transactions on Neural Networks and Learning Systems*	IEEE	–	–	49.5 weeks	–	11.683
22	*IEEE Transactions on Fuzzy Systems*	IEEE	–	–	28.2 weeks	–	8.759
23	*IEEE Computational Social Systems*	IEEE	–	–	29.5 weeks	–	–
24	*IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Transportation Systems*	IEEE	–	–	50.5 weeks	–	5.744
25	*IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Vehicles*	IEEE	–	–	67.3 weeks	–	–
26	*IEEE Intelligent Transportation Systems Magazine*	IEEE	–	–	–	–	3.294
28	*IEEE Access*	EndNote-Match	0.27	6 weeks	–	–	3.745
29	*Sensors*	EndNote-Match	0.20	11 weeks	15 days	–	3.275
30	*Energies*	EndNote-Match	0.17	11 weeks	15.9 days	–	2.702
31	*Environmental Science and Pollution Research*	EndNote-Match	0.16	154 days	67 days	–	3.056
32	*International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*	EndNote-Match	0.16	4 weeks	2 weeks	–	0.160
33	*Soft Computing*	EndNote-Match	0.16	281 days	166 days	–	3.050
34	*Sustainability*	EndNote-	0.16	18 days	14.5 days	–	2.576

		Match					
35	*Symmetry*	MDPI	–	18 days	14 days	40	0.37
36	*Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence and Applications*	IOS Press	–	–	–	–	0.26
37	*Bulletin of Surveying and Mapping*	Oriprobe Information Services	–	–	–	–	–

Note:
Table 2 lists the journals identified across various *Journal Finder* platforms with their respective match scores, time-to-publication metrics, first decision durations, acceptance rates, and impact factors (where available). Missing or inapplicable data are denoted by "–" to indicate the absence of reported information.

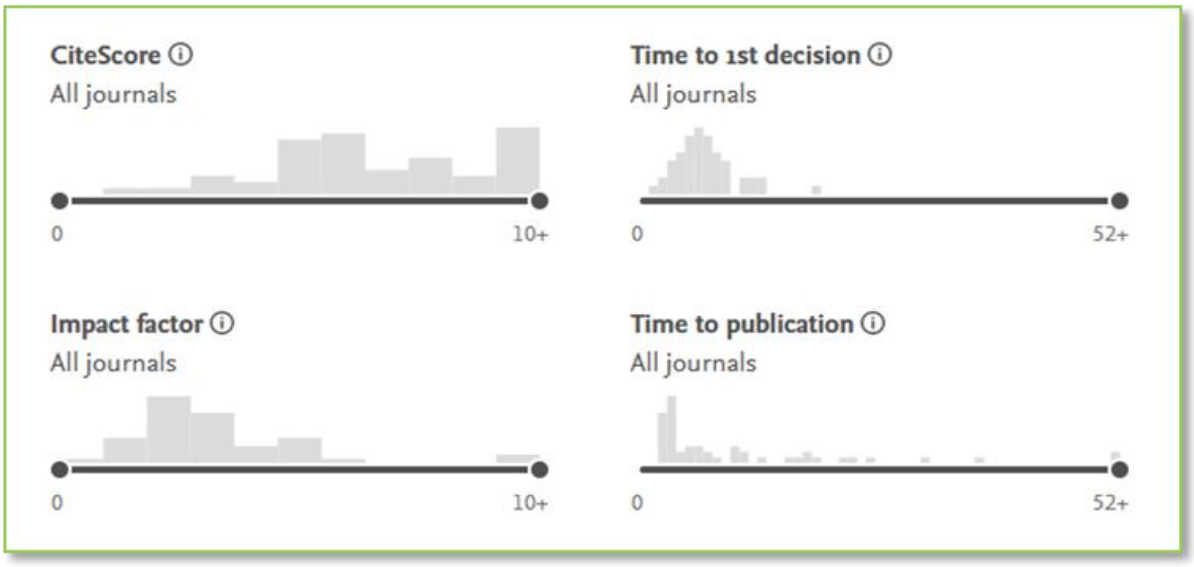

Figure 1. Elsevier charts produced for keywords chosen in this paper.

Figure 1 presents charts generated by Elsevier's *Journal Finder* service, sourced directly from its official website. Such visual representations are valuable for synthesising essential journal selection information, especially as the number of active scholarly journals continues to grow across virtually all academic domains (Linden, 2003, et, al.). Similar pictorial outputs can be developed using the data from **Tables 1 and 2**, tailored to a specific researcher's subject area, to facilitate faster, more informed, and evidence-based journal selection decisions (Feng, 2019, et, al.).

Proposed Model and Discussion

To enable efficient and targeted journal identification, we propose a **JournoMetrics System**, illustrated in **Figure 2**. The model consists of sequential components: **data acquisition**, **journal finder database query**, **information extraction**, **classification**, and **ranking** (Kumar, 2019, et, al.).

The process begins with the researcher providing key manuscript details—namely, a tentative title, abstract, and set of keywords. In the **data acquisition** stage, these inputs are fed into the *Journal Finder* databases under review in this study, including Elsevier *Journal Finder*, Springer *Journal Suggester*, Wiley *Journal Finder*, Enago *Journal Finder*, SAGE *Journal Selector*, IEEE *Publication Recommender*, and Taylor & Francis *Journal Suggester*.

During the **information extraction** phase, relevant metadata is retrieved for each matching journal, such as journal title, publisher, ISSN/eISSN, impact factor, text match score, acceptance rate, and average review and publication times (Memon, 2019).

Next, the **classification** phase segregates the retrieved journals into *relevant* and *non-relevant* categories based on their thematic and methodological fit to the researcher's work.

The **ranking** phase then orders the relevant journals according to predefined metrics (e.g., match score, impact factor, review speed). The key innovation of the proposed model is its ability to recommend either a single *optimal* journal or a shortlist of the **top N** journals, thereby allowing the researcher to quickly identify and prioritise potential publication venues.

Finally, the researcher can document these recommendations, compare them against personal or institutional publishing requirements, and select the most appropriate outlet for submission, thereby reducing trial-and-error and accelerating the decision-making process (Alharbi, 2023, et al.).

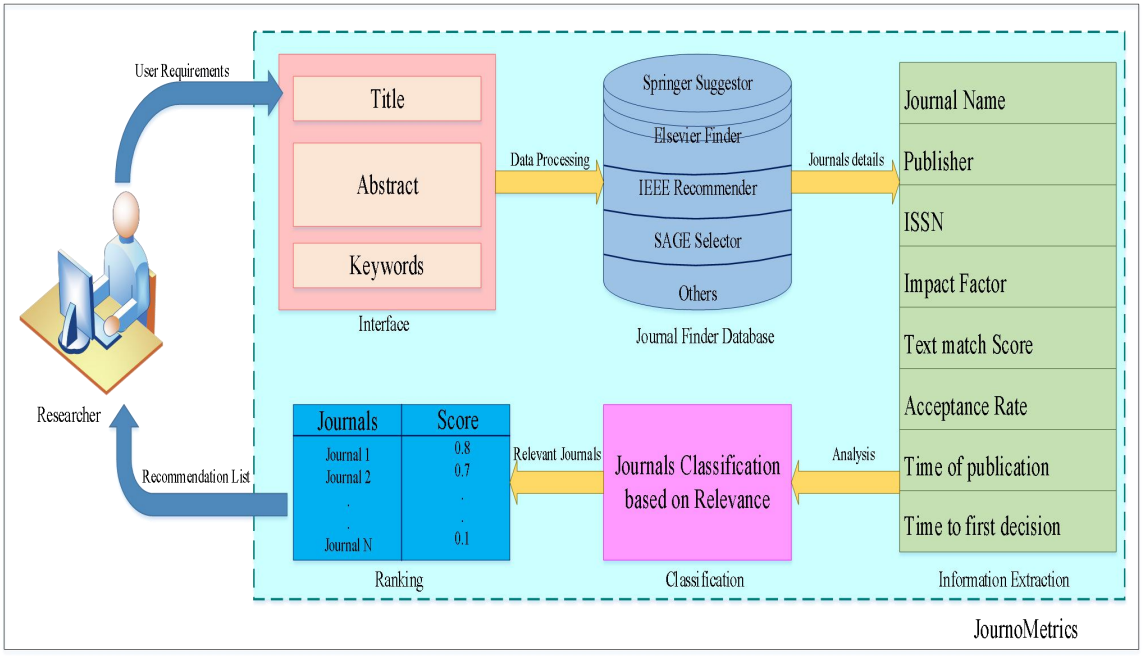

Figure2. Proposed model of JournoMertrics System.

(a) Algorithmic Steps of JournoMetrics

Input: Keywords, tentative title, and abstract.

Output: Selection of the most appropriate journal for submission.

The **JournoMetrics algorithm** is designed to assist researchers in identifying optimal publication outlets based on the level of preparedness of their manuscript. If the researcher already possesses a tentative title and draft abstract, **Steps 1–5** are recommended. Conversely, if only a well-defined set of keywords is available, **Steps 7–8** can be followed.

The process involves visiting relevant publisher or platform websites, entering the available metadata (title, abstract, and/or keywords), and systematically recording the suggested journals (Bhattarcharya, 2018, et al.). These results are subsequently compared and analysed in the manner presented in **Tables 1 and 2** of this study to determine the most appropriate journal for submission.

Steps:

2. Elsevier: *Journal Finder* (title, abstract, and keywords)
3. Springer: *Journal Suggester* (title, abstract, and subject area)
4. Wiley: *Journal Finder* (title and abstract)
5. Enago: *Journal Finder* (abstract)
6. Taylor & Francis: *Journal Suggester* (abstract only)
7. ResearchGate: Search based on publication, researcher, or question (no specific service name)
8. SAGE: *Journal Selector* (keywords, journal name, publisher, ISSN, etc.)
9. IEEE: *Publication Recommender* (keywords/phrases or title)
10. DOAJ: Search using specific keywords or terms of interest
11. DBLP: Keyword-based search for journal listings
12. Jurn: Keyword-based search with sorting by date and relevance

Related Work

The rapid expansion of scholarly publishing has intensified the challenge of selecting the most suitable journal for a given manuscript. The alignment between a journal's scope, as well as the research interests of its editorial board and reviewers, plays a decisive role in the acceptance and subsequent readership of submitted articles (14). A mismatch can result in rejection or limited dissemination of the work (Chakraborty, 2021, et al.).

Recommender systems offer a potential solution by assisting authors in finding journals that best match their work. Common approaches include:

- **Content-based recommendation** – matching manuscript metadata to journal profiles.
- **Collaborative filtering** – leveraging submission patterns from similar authors.
- **Graph-based recommendation** – analysing citation and co-citation networks.
- **Hybrid methods** – combining multiple recommendation strategies.

Beel et al. conducted a comprehensive literature review of recommender systems, examining methodologies, evaluation metrics, and datasets. Kumar et al. proposed a statistical model to analyse the relationship between journal acceptance rates and first decision times (in days), using *Elsevier Journal Finder* and *Springer Journal Suggester* as data sources. Feng et al. developed **Pubmender**, a deep learning-based recommender system tailored for biomedical research, which recommends suitable PubMed journals based on manuscript abstracts. Wang et al. explored the application of machine learning to recommend publication venues in the fields of IT and computer science. However, to the best of our knowledge, relatively few studies have comprehensively examined the *Journal Finder* ecosystem (15).

Beyond recommender systems, **bibliometric analysis** plays a critical role in understanding journal characteristics. Such analyses examine:

- Year-wise publication output and growth trends.
- Author productivity, collaboration patterns, and geographic distribution.
- Subject-specific article distribution.
- Reference and citation patterns, including reference length and distribution.

Bibliometric evaluations also enable cross-validation of citation trends across multiple databases and help identify top-performing journals over a defined time span (Balstad, 2020, et al.). These analyses provide insights into document types, institutional contributions, country-level distributions, co-authorship networks, and patterns of global versus local collaboration. Furthermore, citation and co-citation analyses yield valuable historical context and identify emerging research trends, thereby guiding authors toward journals with the highest topical relevance and impact potential.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Conclusion

Metrics serve as indispensable tools across all research domains, providing measurable indicators that guide decision-making. Historically conceptualised by mathematicians, the concept of *metrics* in scholarly publishing encompasses various journal-specific characteristics, including title, time to first review or editorial decision, acceptance rate, and impact factor—each offering valuable insights into a journal's visibility and quality. When organised systematically, these journal-related metrics can assist the academic community in making informed submission decisions and, ultimately, in contributing more effectively to research dissemination.

Among the tools available to facilitate this process, *Journal Finder* services represent one of the most valuable resources for authors. These services not only inspire researchers by revealing a range of potential publication venues but also provide targeted recommendations, enabling authors to align their submissions with journals that best match their work's scope and thematic relevance. Recognising the absence of a unified platform that consolidates such services, this study presents a comparative framework that integrates their outputs to benefit researchers across disciplines.

Based on the domain-specific analysis conducted in this paper—summarised in **Tables 1 and 2**—the *Journal of Big Data* emerges as the most preferred journal for the examined field, considering a balanced combination of features such as review speed, acceptance rate, and thematic fit.

An additional observation from this study is that publishers employ diverse naming conventions for similar services, ranging from the straightforward *Journal Finder* to alternatives such as *Journal Suggester*, *Journal Selector*, and *Publication Recommender*. These naming distinctions often reflect variations in service features, further highlighting the importance of a consolidated evaluation framework like **JournoMetrics** to ensure researchers can make informed, efficient, and strategic journal selection decisions.

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