

VIDEO SUMMARY

Choosing Journals with Metrics

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Choosing Journals with Metrics | Publishing: Journals, Conferences and Beyond | research

Neha Agrawal explains four journal indicators that often appear during a publication search. Each one is built from a particular database, citation window and calculation. Read the metric name together with its year and subject category; the bare number has very little meaning.

The Journal Impact Factor is published in Clarivate's Journal Citation Reports. Its familiar calculation uses citations received in a given year to eligible journal content from the preceding two years, divided by the corresponding citable items. This short window can reflect recent attention, while citation speeds vary sharply across disciplines. A value that looks high in one field may be ordinary in another.

CiteScore is based on Scopus. The current method uses a four-year window and counts five document types consistently in the numerator and denominator: articles, reviews, conference papers, book chapters and data papers. The longer window gives slower-citing work more time to register. Absolute CiteScore values should still be compared within a subject field; a percentile or field-normalised measure is more useful across fields.

SJR adds the standing of the citing source to the calculation, so citations from journals with stronger citation networks carry more weight. SNIP adjusts for differences in citation activity between fields. A SNIP near 1 represents performance around the database's field benchmark. Both measures depend on Scopus coverage and their own methodology.

For journal selection, start with the people who should read the paper and the journals that actually publish this kind of work. Check the aims and scope, recent articles, editorial board, peer-review process, fees, archiving, publication ethics and expected timelines. Verify indexing and metric claims in the official Clarivate or Scopus source; journal websites and unsolicited emails sometimes display invented scores.

Indian faculty should also check the current rules used by their institution, discipline, regulator or funder. Those rules can change, and an old list or screenshot can mislead. A journal metric is evidence about citation activity at venue level. It cannot establish the quality of a particular paper, researcher or research programme. DORA and the Leiden Manifesto are useful guides when metrics enter hiring, promotion, funding or assessment.