

Utilization of Time Series Tools in Life-sciences and Neuroscience

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Neuroscience Insights
Volume 15: 1–18
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DOI: 10.1177/2633105520963045



ABSTRACT: Time series tools are part and parcel of modern day research. Their usage in the biomedical field; specifically, in neuroscience, has not been previously quantified. A quantification of trends can tell about lacunae in the current uses and point towards future uses. We evaluated the principles and applications of few classical time series tools, such as Principal Component Analysis, Neural Networks, common Auto-regression Models, Markov Models, Hidden Markov Models, Fourier Analysis, Spectral Analysis, in addition to diverse work, generically lumped under time series category. We quantified the usage from two perspectives, one, information technology professionals', other, researchers utilizing these tools for biomedical and neuroscience research. For understanding trends from the information technology perspective, we evaluated two of the largest open source question and answer databases of Stack Overflow and Cross Validated. We quantified the trends in their application in the biomedical domain, and specifically neuroscience, by searching literature and application usage on PubMed. While the use of all the time series tools continues to gain popularity in general biomedical and life science research, and also neuroscience, and so have been the total number of questions asked on Stack overflow and Cross Validated, the total views to questions on these are on a decrease in recent years, indicating well established texts, algorithms, and libraries, resulting in engineers not looking for what used to be common questions a few years back. The use of these tools in neuroscience clearly leaves room for improvement.

KEYWORDS: principal component analysis, time series, artificial neural network, auto regression, markov model, hidden markov model, fourier analysis, stack overflow, cross validated, pubMed, neuroscience, spectral analysis, empirical analysis

RECEIVED: April 10, 2020. **ACCEPTED:** September 11, 2020.

TYPE: Original Research

FUNDING: The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS: The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Introduction

A time series comprises data recorded in a temporal manner. Generally, it is a succession recorded at uniformly distant positions. Time series forecasting is a technique to predict values based on historically recorded values. Conversely, time series analysis aims to obtain significant statistics from time series, which can be applied to real-world, continuous, or discrete numeric data. Time series can be used in any domain involving temporal measurements; thus, it finds application in a wide range of domains, such as statistics, weather forecasting, electroencephalography, electrocardiogram, etc.¹ In addition, time series data, which comprises numerical fields ordered chronologically, is always considered a whole instead of individual fields. Therefore, it requires specialized tools, known as time series tools, for the analysis.

In the last decade, the developments in Neuroscience involve a considerable increase in the size, dimensionality, and complexity of neural data.^{2,3} Much of these data are multi-dimensional, complex, and often cross multiple levels of organizations, such as neurons, circuits, systems, whole brain, etc.^{4,5} Deriving statistical inferences from these data heavily rely on the advances in time series tools. It is well established that no single tool can be chosen as the best for analysis in different situations.⁶⁻⁸ Hence, an evaluation of all major approaches is needed to determine the existing state-of-the-art in the area.

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Here, we quantify the usage of time series tools from engineering, biomedical, and neuroscience point of view, so that researchers can understand the trends and wisely use the right tool for their applications.

Time series tools can be categorized in varied ways. Some of the possible categorizations are time and frequency domain, univariate and multivariate, parametric and non-parametric. For the initial study, we have selected 7 classical tools and categorized them based on time and frequency domain. These tools are Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Neural Networks, ARMA-ARIMA (ie, Autoregressive moving average, Autoregressive integrated moving average) Models, Markov models, Fourier analysis, and Spectral analysis.

We undertake a twofold data-driven stance to quantify the state-of-the-art practices and trends related to the utilization of these tools. Firstly, to examine the recent developments from the perspective of IT-practitioners, programmers, and statisticians, we mine knowledge from community-driven popular Q&A websites: Stack Overflow and Cross Validated. The number of questions posted, number of accepted answers, views gathered, and content of the discussion were analyzed for twelve years. Subsequently, we emphasize the application of these tools in the biomedical sector, along with neuroscience, by quantifying the vast indexed database of PubMed. In addition, we conduct a rigorous literature survey for each tool to delineate their usage patterns among researchers.



Methods

Selection of time series tools and literature survey

We select 7 time series tools and split them into time and frequency domain. The tools, namely ARMA-ARIMA, Markov model, and Hidden Markov model, are time domain tools, whereas Fourier and Spectral Analysis are frequency domain. In addition, PCA and Neural Networks are categorized as general time series tools due to their usage in both the time and frequency domain (Supplemental Figure S1).

Stack overflow and cross validated analysis

Stack Overflow (SO), founded in 2008, is the largest community-driven question and answer (Q&A) website for IT practitioners, professionals, and enthusiast programmers. It features questions on a multitude of concepts in computer programming and information technology, ranging from software engineering, data science, machine learning to statistics. The link of stack overflow is <https://stackoverflow.com/>, and additional summary information is available on Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_Overflow.

Cross Validated (CV) is a specially oriented website of Stack Exchange, <https://stats.stackexchange.com/> network that features questions related to statistics, machine learning, data analysis, data mining, and data visualization. Summary of Stack Exchange can be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_Exchange.

At the time, this analysis was conducted (3rd June 2019), the corpus consists of more than 42K time series tools related questions with approximately 1000 views per question (Supplemental Table S1).

To identify time series related questions, tags of each question posted at SO and CV were analyzed. IT-practitioners asking questions on these websites tend to provide a set of tags that accurately describes their question. These tags provide categorization to each question posted on these websites. Time series-related tags across each tool were manually selected and reported in Supplemental Table S2. The questions with at least 1 time series-related tag were selected for the analysis.

Each time series tool is analyzed based on the following parameters:

- 1) The number of questions posted from Jan 2008 to June 2019: this parameter provides us metric to understand the interest gathered around each time series tool among IT-practitioners and how this interest has evolved in the last 12 years.
- 2) The number of questions with an accepted answer: this parameter provides us the metric of satisfaction of users asking time series-related questions, as users asking a question can accept an answer that accurately and correctly answers users' queries. Higher accepted answers corresponding to a time series tool indicate the satisfaction of the user.

- 3) Viewership: this parameter provides us the metric of visibility of time series tools. Higher the visibility of a time series tool, higher is the ease of availability of the necessary resources related to it, ranging from the methodology of usage to solutions of errors and bugs. Mean views have also been plotted corresponding to every year, providing an overall picture for the analysis. Sometimes, the mean views are observed to be higher than the maximum in the boxplot because the mean (or average) is susceptible to extreme values. On the contrary, the boxplots are created after the removal of outliers for visual aid.
- 4) Additionally, the content of questions related to each time series tool was studied to gain insights. A corpus of questions was created by aggregating the title and description of each question across various time series tools. All the embedded HTML code, along with special characters and stop words, were removed from the corpus. Word Clouds of discussion for each time series tool were created, where the size of a word represents its frequency.

PubMed analysis

PubMed is a search engine that indexes biomedical and life sciences research. Analysis of time series related research indexed in PubMed was used to study the use of time series tools in biomedical research and specifically neuroscience. The title, abstract, and text word of relevant PubMed articles were analyzed to determine the presence of several time series tools. Assessment of the evolution of these tools within Neuroscience domain is conducted by identifying time series related research on PubMed with keywords "Neuroscience," "Mental Health," "Brain," "Mental Illness," "Neurology," "Psychology," "Depression," "Anxiety," "Neurodegeneration," "Mania," "Schizophrenia," "Delusion," "Alcohol," "Alcoholism," "Addiction," "Aggression," "Violence," "Neurophysiology," and lumped the results together. This approach will approximate the results for the Neuroscience domain as the underlying limitation of this approach is that it would not be able to identify some small fraction of papers, which might not have any of these keywords in them and yet belong to neuroscience. The search commands used to explore the results are illustrated in Supplemental Table S3. The research papers indexed on PubMed are accounted on and before 5 October, 2019.

Throughout the analysis of Stack-overflow, Cross-validated, and PubMed, we observed a sudden fall in 2019. it is due to the fact that data were not available for the complete year.

General tools for time series analysis

Principal component analysis

PCA is a well-established linear dimensionality reduction approach that has been extensively used by the researchers.⁹ It is used to convert potentially correlated variables to linearly uncorrelated principal

components by the orthogonal transformation. In 1933, PCA was coined by an American statistician and an influential economist H. Hotelling,⁷ who was inspired by the principal axis theorem, given by Karl Pearson.⁶ Conventional statisticians used PCA as a dimensionality reduction tool; however, in recent developments, researchers have exploited latent properties of PCA to identify patterns within the data.

A considerable increase in time series data is observed across all domains, especially in business, medical, and scientific databases.¹⁰ Analyzing a large multi-dimensional time series is a well-established limitation. Among others, these limitations have hindered the way for determining patterns associated with stocks, identifying aberrations in an online monitoring system, recognizing non-obvious relationships between 2 time series, and hypothesis testing among time series.¹¹ In the past, large multi-dimension time series have created challenges on multiple fronts, such as clustering,¹² classification,^{13,14} and mining of association rules.¹⁵ Recently, such time series pose challenges to scalable computing,¹⁶ data sharing, and reproducibility.¹⁷ Several methods were developed to speed up the analysis of large time series; however, research shows that dimensionality reduction has emerged as the most prominent method.¹⁰ Moreover, dimensionality reduction is crucial to the analysis of neural data, which are often large and multi-dimensional.¹⁸ It includes data (1) with cross multiple organizational levels (eg, neurons, circuits, and brain) or (2) involving various biological domains (eg, anatomical and functional connectivity, genetic patterns and disease states, etc.). Therefore, dimensionality reduction plays a crucial role in time series analysis.

Applications: PCA is used in Bi-plot graphic display of matrices, which is often used to represent any matrix of rank two, comprising a vector for each cell of the matrix. Vector for an element is selected so that the inner product of vectors corresponding to its row and column yields the element. Notably, the rank corresponds to the maximum count of linearly independent columns in the vector space. Subsequent to PCA analysis, bi-plots depict interunit lengths and clustered units. In addition, they delineate variances, correlation and allows the visual appraisal of large data matrices structures.¹⁹

PCA has also been used as a tool for estimation and analysis. For instance, it is used to estimate the origin of heavy metal pollution in sediments, which was conducted at Rybnik Reservoir, Southern Poland.²⁰ Moreover, PCA is utilized to analyze the timely variance of loading of trace components in bottom sediments.²⁰

PCA has medical applications as a method for the pattern analysis.²¹ A knee osteoarthritis research was administered on fifty subjects, who suffered from end-stage knee osteoarthritis; in addition, it comprises an age representative control group of 63 subjects. Gait data is represented as temporal waveforms depicting joint measurements throughout the gait cycle. Feature space comprising temporal waveforms of n subjects on p variables

were constructed. These features include knee alignment variables and bone geometry data. The analysis focused on 3 gait waveform measures: the knee flexion angle, flexion moment, and adduction moment. The aim was to determine the biomechanical features of these gait measures related to knee osteoarthritis. Hypothesis testing was done to identify group differences, and discriminant analysis to (1) quantify overall group difference, and (2) establish a hierarchy of discriminatory ability among the gait waveform features. The authors analyzed this feature space by using PCA analysis, not only as a data reduction tool but also as a method for further differential analysis.^{22,23} It was found that there exists a strong correlation between gait waveforms with respect to time. The study also proved that PCA can be used as a method of kinetic and kinematic analysis of gait waveforms.

Limitations: Underlying assumptions for the optimal working of PCA is that correlations in the data are linear. To address this limitation, Nonlinear Principal Component Analysis (NLPCA) was proposed that uses auto-associative neural networks.²⁴ It aims to create an identity map by learning a feed-forward network such that input variables are recreated at the output layer. This neural net comprises lesser nodes as compared to the input or output layers; thus, it enables the production of a concise depiction of the variables.

Inferences from PubMed: PCA being a general purpose statistical technique, also has a style of reasoning. It is used as a 'hypothesis generating' tool, creating a statistical mechanics framework for biological systems modeling, without making any prior theoretical assumptions. For this very reason, it has been used in drug discovery and biomedical research.²⁵ For example, it was used as a truncation technique in the study of the classification of *Mycobacteria* using Raman spectra,²⁶ where the group compared classification accuracies after applying PCA and LDA (Linear discriminant analysis) with principal component selection methods across various centering and scaling options.

Multistage PCA (MSPCA) has been used for the study of abdominal electrocardiogram decomposition.²⁷ MSPCA aims to identify the variables that can be well estimated by a linear model. It involves 2 steps: top-down and down-top steps. The top-down step identifies an initial solution recursively, whereas the down-top step is introduced to penalize the maximum number of phases of the final solution.²⁸ To rephrase, dimensionality reduction is achieved by the eigenvectors with the most significant eigenvalues as a new orthonormal basis.²⁹ The electrical activity of the fetal heart has comparatively less energy; therefore, traditionally recommended component analysis fails to separate the 2 ECG signals: maternal and fetal ECGs. Thus, step-by-step extraction of abdominal ECG signal components, using multistage PCA is preferred. In addition, it has been used to create a simplistic aging equation that

Applications: The neural network has been extensively studied, which has led to its application in diversified fields, such as business applications, forecasting, classification, pattern recognition, and time series prediction. In addition, the neural network is being utilized on a day-to-day basis in real-world business applications, such as making stock market prediction,⁴¹ which weighs many factors, for example, the rise and fall of stocks. The neural network can process the time series data, analyze its pattern, and predict stock prices. Apart from that, it is used for e-commerce fraud detection through credit cards,^{42,43} money laundering detection, and telecommunication fraud,⁴⁴ that is, a neuro-fuzzy model for predicting business bankruptcy.

Deep learning is referred to as combining several layers of the neural network to perform feature engineering, along with extracting latent features from the data.⁴⁵ The deep learning technique is highly advantageous, as it can process more complex information with high accuracy but requires a large dataset for training (or learning). For instance, Dialog-Tech facilitates a system for call attribution and conversion.⁴⁶ They use the neural network to classify inbound calls into predetermined categories or assign lead quality scores based on the call transcription and the marketing channel or keyword that drove the call.⁴⁷ This process required a considerable amount of historical data for training.

The neural network finds application in classification domain, such as Internet traffic classification,⁴⁸ using Bayesian neural networks without using the source or destination port information. It works by extracting the features from packet streams consisting of 1 or more packet headers pattern classification.⁴⁹ Image classification in medical imaging and signal processing is undergoing cutting-edge development.⁵⁰ It involves the detection and classification of tumors and X-rays, along with diagnostic systems for cancer and heart diseases.⁵¹

Another application can be seen on LinkedIn that is a social networking site for professionals.⁴⁶ It uses the neural network along with text classifiers to (1) filter out the spam or abusive content from the user's feed, (2) improve their recommendation system, and (3) search relevant products for members and customers. In addition to business forecasting, ANNs have been designed for forecasting tourism⁵² in the Balearic Islands (Spain) and monthly energy⁵³ demand using the time series data for the last 6 years. Most artificial intelligence has neural networks at the heart of operations.

Inferences from PubMed: The neural network has been used to detect diabetic retinopathy⁵⁴ from a local diabetic retinal screening program. The study achieved sensitivity and specificity closer to 80% on the international and domestic databases (New Zealand). In addition, it has been used in colorization, that is, conversion of grayscale image to a colored one, which is supposed to be a challenging task since it requires labeling scribbles on the target images manually, or curation of a diverse

set of colored reference images.⁵⁵ An electrocardiogram beat classification system was implemented by BIRCNN, that is, Bidirectional Recurrent Neural Network (BIRNN) combined with Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). The morphological features were drawn out using CNN, followed by considering them in the context using BIRNN.⁵⁶

In a study, a neural network was implemented with an auto organizing radial basis function to enhance accuracy and parsimony. The authors used an adaptive version of the swarm optimization algorithm, popularly known as Adaptive Particle Swarm Optimization (APSO).⁵⁷ Fine-tuning of weights and avoidance of local optimal is achieved by using non-linear regression. In addition, APSO is used to optimize the scale and parameters of the neural network with a radial basis function. Therefore, it efficiently produces a concise model that yields high accuracy. Producing accurate surgical simulations is essential in the medical domain. The neural network was used to generate a lifelike and stable simulation of soft tissue deformation in real-time.⁵⁸ (Figure 2).

Tools for time domain analysis

ARMA and ARIMA models

Two univariate models that represent stochastic dependence of time series data are ARMA and ARIMA models. Among others, they are useful in predictions of epidemiologic time series. They follow the "Box-Jenkins" approach.⁵⁹

ARMA model: Autoregressive (AR), when combined with the moving average (MA) model, forms the ARMA model. It was introduced by Peter Whittle in 1951⁶⁰ and has been widely used since 1970 after getting mentioned in the book by Box and Jenkins. Let us assume a continuous and equally spaced time series $z_t, z_{t-1}, z_{t-2}, \dots$ with $E(z_t) = 0$. Let $a_t, a_{t-1}, a_{t-2}, \dots$ be the white noise with zero mean and constant variance, where present observation can be dependent on past observations. AR Model exhibits the present observation z_t , that is, linearly dependent on previously recorded z_{t-1} and white noise variable at:

$$z_t = \phi z_{t-1} + a_t,$$

where ϕ is called the auto-regression parameter, as z_t is regressed over z_{t-1} with order 1 as 1 observation from the past is regressed. This model is denoted by $AR(p)$ with p equal to unity.

Consider a generalized AR model of order p :

$$z_t = \phi_1 z_{t-1} + \dots + \phi_p z_{t-p} + a_t. \quad (6)$$

MA model represents z_t as a linear combination of present and previous white noise:

$$z_t = a_t - \theta a_{t-1},$$

where θ is a parameter. This is called the MA model of order one and is denoted by $MA(q)$, where $q = 1$. Consider a generalized MA model of order q :

conditional maximum likelihood. Stimulation is done to select the best criteria among AIC (Akaike information criterion), AICc (AIC with correction), HQ (Hannan-Quinn), and SIC (Schwarz information criterion). A hundred estimations were generated for the determination of the ARMA model. Out of 4 criteria, AICc frequently generated the optimal model; in twenty instances, it was typically better than the other criteria.

Linear limitation: ARIMA considers a linear form of the model as among the time series values, a linear correlation is assumed with nonlinear patterns. To address this limitation, the hybrid ARIMA model was combined with the neural network by G. Peter Zhang. The results indicate that the combined model enhances the forecasting accuracy effectively.⁶⁶

Hybrid ARIMA: A hybrid methodology, that is, the combination of ARIMA and neural network, was used to (1) utilize the distinct virtues of ARIMA models and neural network; and subsequently, (2) tackle a threefold problem in prediction.⁶⁶ The threefold problem as described by Zhang is as follows—firstly, when series is produced by linear or nonlinear process, which tool is more effective at sample forecasting owing to several variables like sampling variation, model selection, and structural changes; secondly, real-world data is often a combination of linear and nonlinear parameters; and thirdly, no single method is best in every situation. Perhaps in these situations, the ARIMA model does not consider nonlinear dependencies, whereas the neural network can efficiently model both linear and nonlinear dependencies.

To observe the desired results in Zhang's Study,⁶⁶ all ARIMA models were implemented by SAS (Statistical Analysis System) /ETS (Error, Trend, Seasonal) system, whereas neural network models were implemented by the GRG2-based training system. GEG2 is a general-purpose nonlinear optimizer. One step or single day forecast is examined. In terms of mean squared error, the percentage enhancement of the proposed model against ARIMA and neural network were 16.13% and 9.89%, respectively. ARIMA and neural network were consistently outperformed by the hybrid model across multiple time durations; however, the enhancement of the hybrid model for longer durations was not impressive.

Transfer model functions: Transfer Model Functions was developed by Box & Jenkins⁵⁹ as an important way to analyze the relationship between 2 ARIMA series. Here, one series is "response" or "output" series and other series is called "input" or "explanatory" series. For example, input series as daily concentration of carbon dioxide in an area and output series as daily temperature recording of that area.

Inferences from PubMed: China, a country known for its quick adoption of data science and artificial intelligence, found the application of ARMA combined with generalized regression neural network (GRNN) to predict hepatitis cases in Heng county.⁶⁷ The combined model was trained on historical data of hepatitis cases from 2005 to 2012, along with individual models. The combined model was proved to be the best model and supported the potential decision for checking hepatitis infections. Seasonal ARIMA was used for the detection of the dengue hemorrhagic fever⁶⁸ without any constant and Tukey's adjustments. In addition, China used these models to forecast the PM10, that is, an air pollutant, time series using wavelet analysis.⁶⁹ A study was conducted in South Iran for the prediction of the monthly trend of scorpion stings using a mixed seasonal ARMA model. Results confirmed the association between meteorological variables, such as temperature and humidity, and scorpion stings.⁷⁰ Neural networks, along with ARMA forecasting techniques, have been used to learn from a 5-year-old daily medical linear accelerator (Linac) quality assurance (QA) data⁷¹ and is significant for continuous enhancement of the well-being of the patient. Another application is the dynamic forecasting of Zika virus outbreaks based on Google trends.⁷² Sweden used the ARMA-ARIMA model to study the association between per capita alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm using the data from 1987 to 2015,⁷³ which showed positive and significant association (Figure 3).

Markov model

Markov model assumes that the upcoming states are dependent merely on the present state and not on the historical states. Generally, the above assumption facilitates reasoning that could not have been possible otherwise. In the domains of predictive modeling and probabilistic forecasting, a given system must exhibit on the Markov property. In 1906, Markov came up with a study on Markov chain delineating that under specific conditions, average outcomes of these chains converge to a fixed vector of values; thus, validating a weak law of large numbers without the independence assumption. Mathematically, this is considered as a requirement for such laws to hold.

In addition, the segmental semi-markovian model has been helpful in the problem of automatically detecting specific patterns in time series data. It provides a systematic and coherent framework for leveraging both prior knowledge and training data.⁸² The pattern of interest is modeled as a K-state segmental HMM, where each state is responsible for generating a component of overall shape using a shape-based regression function. Studies have been done on Plasma Etch process data,

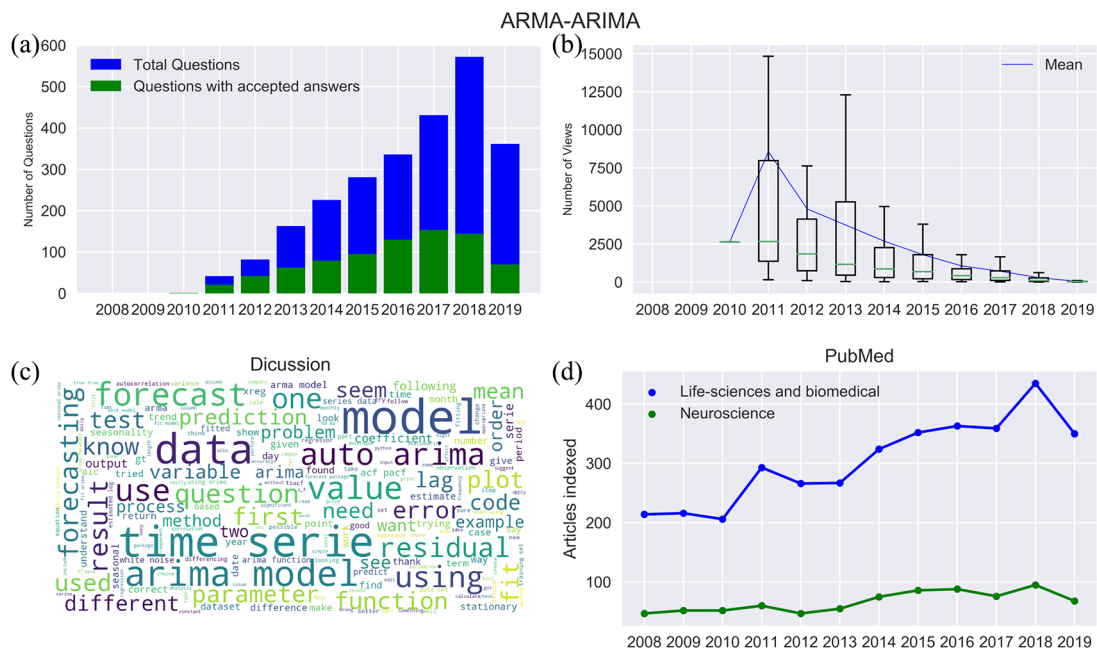


Figure 3. Quantification of trends related to ARMA-ARIMA models. (a) ARMA-ARIMA models were first observed during 2010-11; subsequently, a linear increment in questions and accepted answers were observed. During this time, these models were used in many projects,^{33,74} such as predicting tourism demand.⁹ The Government of China found the application of the ARMA model to analyze the axial bolt force data of foundation pit in the China Zun Tower, and fit the specific change process of bolt axial of the anchor to predict the trend of change.⁷⁵ Several research studies can be found, includes testing the effectiveness of the ARMA model in stock prediction and software development.⁷⁶ (b) ARMA-ARIMA models garnered the highest mean views per question in 2011, which decreased exponentially. In addition, the IQR followed a decreasing trend. Notably, approximately 50% of questions have views less than 2.5K. ARMA-ARIMA models were extensively used in business for predicting a quantity and understanding its past trends,⁷⁷ for example, seasonal patterns in sales,⁷⁸ estimating the effect on the newly launched product, and stock prediction.^{79,80} (c) Some frequently used terms are time series, forecast, first order, parameter, parameter, and differential. All of them are related to the usage of ARMA-ARIMA models for forecasting. Generally, a non-stationary series can be transformed into a stationary using differentiation depending on the autocorrelation function for slow decay.⁸¹ (d) Life sciences and biomedical followed an increasing trend in terms of articles indexed. However, ARMA-ARIMA has not been extensively used in Neuroscience, 20 articles were indexed in 2008 and 100 in 2018.

New York Stock Exchange data, etc. In all these cases algorithm was able to find patterns correctly.

Markov regression model: Regression analysis with the quasi-likelihood approach is done with time series data in.⁸³ “Observation-driven” models are a class of Markov models described in.⁸⁴ These models provide conditional mean and variances; in addition, the past is explicit functions of past outcomes. This class includes Markov chain and autoregressive models for continuous and categorical observation.

Inferences from PubMed: In Ontario, Canada, a study⁸⁵ used Markov modeling in assessing the monetary feasibility of a suicide prevention program. The study focused on variations in health and estimated the incremental expense per quality-adjusted life-year gained over fifty years for participants of a suicide-prevention program in comparison with no intervention. In England, a study used the Markov model coupled with decision trees to assess the monetary feasibility of ETB (P1 vital Oxford Emotional Test Battery)⁸⁶ monitoring over patients suffering from depression. Markov was

also used to evaluate surgical treatment’s cost-effectiveness for the fix of anterior pelvic organ prolapse (POP) from the UK National Health Service.⁸⁷ Anterior compartment prolapse is the most common POP with a range of surgical treatment alternatives available. Markov model has been used as a decision model to evaluate disability worsening and progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) risk in patients receiving natalizumab (NTZ), fingolimod (FGL), or glatiramer acetate (GA) over 30 years.⁸⁸ Markov models are widely used in the extraction of discrete brain states in many research work⁸⁹ (Figure 4).

Hidden Markov model

Hidden Markov model (HMM) is an advanced extension to the Markov model that assumes the system is a Markov process with unobserved (ie, hidden) states. The forward and backward transitions employed in HMM and calculations of marginal probabilities were introduced by Stratonovich in 1960; they were further expanded by Baum et al.¹³⁹ Their first applications involved speech recognition.

assumes that no randomness is involved in the development of future states and assumes predictability connected with the deterministic character of classical and non-quantum physical processes, for example, a nova or supernova light curve. Within deterministic models, periodic and non-periodic also behave differently under a Fourier analysis, so it is required to distinguish between the two. Integral of Fourier transform exists only if the function $f(t)$ is integral, but periodic deterministic models are not integral.

Nondeterministic models are unpredictable and have random noise, for example, radioactive decay. Definite predictions cannot be made about a non-deterministic variation $f(t)$ at time t , but we can analyze probability statements of $f(t)$. In most cases, these probability statements depend upon the past values of f , that is, there is a correlation between the present and past values of f .

An approach to apply Fourier transactions is described in.¹¹¹ Inequalities are the most important tools in Fourier analysis. W.H. Young extended the Parseval theorem for Fourier transform and convolution and observed that inequality for the Fourier transform could be obtained from a convolution inequality.¹¹² sform on Periodic, Stochastic, and a combination of periodic, non-periodic, and stochastic functions. Short-time Fourier transform is the output of an arbitrary bank of filters, for simplicity identical, symmetric, band-pass filters are uniformly spaced in frequency.

Fourier synthesis: The process of decomposing a function into frequency components is called Fourier analysis, while the operation of rebuilding the function from these components is known as Fourier synthesis. There are majorly 2 methods for Fourier synthesis: Filter-Bank Summation (FBS) and Overlap add (OLA) methods. The advantages, disadvantages, and applications of these methods are discussed in detail by Jont and Lawrence.¹¹³

Limitations: Practical datasets need not be uniformly spaced. Data spacing has a limiting effect on the accuracy of Fourier analysis. Deeming¹¹¹ has designed an analysis algorithm that does not depend upon data spacing and works, with both unequally and equally sized data. A systematic method was developed by Ablowitz et al.,¹¹⁴ which facilitates the identification of specific evolution class equations. It can be regarded as extended Fourier for nonlinear processes.

Inferences from PubMed: Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) is a method extensively employed¹¹⁵⁻¹¹⁷ in biomedical, life sciences, and neuroscience. It aims to derive an infrared spectrum of absorption or emission of a solid, liquid, and gas. An FTIR spectrometer concurrently gathers high-spectral-resolution data across a wide spectral range.

This depicts a major advantage over a dispersive spectrometer, which computes intensity over a narrow range of wavelengths. Fast Fourier transform has been used in the analysis of EEG (Electroencephalography) signals during mouth breathing.¹¹⁸ Fourier had its applications in wave-front reconstruction, which effectively decreased the processing time for large telescopes with large degrees of freedom.¹¹⁹ Fourier has been used in understanding the complexities of modern optics and has been widely applied in optical information processing, imaging, holography, etc. In 1 study, FTIR was used to validate that patients who exercise regularly tend to have better proteostasis, living, along with inflammatory, oxidative stress, and vasoactive biomarkers in adults with hypertension.¹²⁰ In a different study, Fourier was used in the clock genes disruption of ICU patients.¹²¹ Often the environment of ICU and nonphotic synchronizers disrupt the cardiac rhythms of patients, which raises a question of whether critically patients have desynchronization at the molecular level after 1 week of stay in the ICU (Figure 6).

Singular spectrum analysis

Singular Spectrum Analysis (SSA) is a nonparametric spectral estimation method. The idea of SSA was planted during the conceptualization of the spectral decomposition of the covariance operator of random processes by Karhunen and Loève in the 1940s. SSA and multichannel SSA (M-SSA) were introduced by Broomhead and King^{19,140} and, later by Fraedrich¹³² in context to nonlinear dynamics. Further, around the 1990s, the analogies were drawn by Ghil and Vautard^{24,141,142} between the trajectory matrix of Broomhead–King, and Karhunen–Loeve decomposition, that lead to the formulation of SSA.

Applications: SSA is used in the evaluation of the Paleoclimatic time series.¹⁴¹ Authors needed a tool to analyze short and noisy records; after analyzing the available tools, they came up with SSA. SSA provided qualitative and quantitative information about the deterministic and stochastic parts of system characteristics observed in a time series, even if it is short and noisy. As described by,¹⁴¹ the other important features of SSA are: (1) it yields estimates of the statistical dimension, (2) explains main physical phenomena represented by the data, and (3) clarifies noise characteristics of the data. All of these features are exploited in the study of 4 paleoclimatic records.

Another significant study is utilizing SSA deals with the smoothing of raw kinematic signals.¹⁴³ With several examples, the study shows that SSA outperforms conventional digital filtering methods. Systematic errors were introduced as noise while recording displacement signals for the biochemical analysis. This noise gets amplified by the differentiation of displacement signals to obtain velocity and acceleration, which is

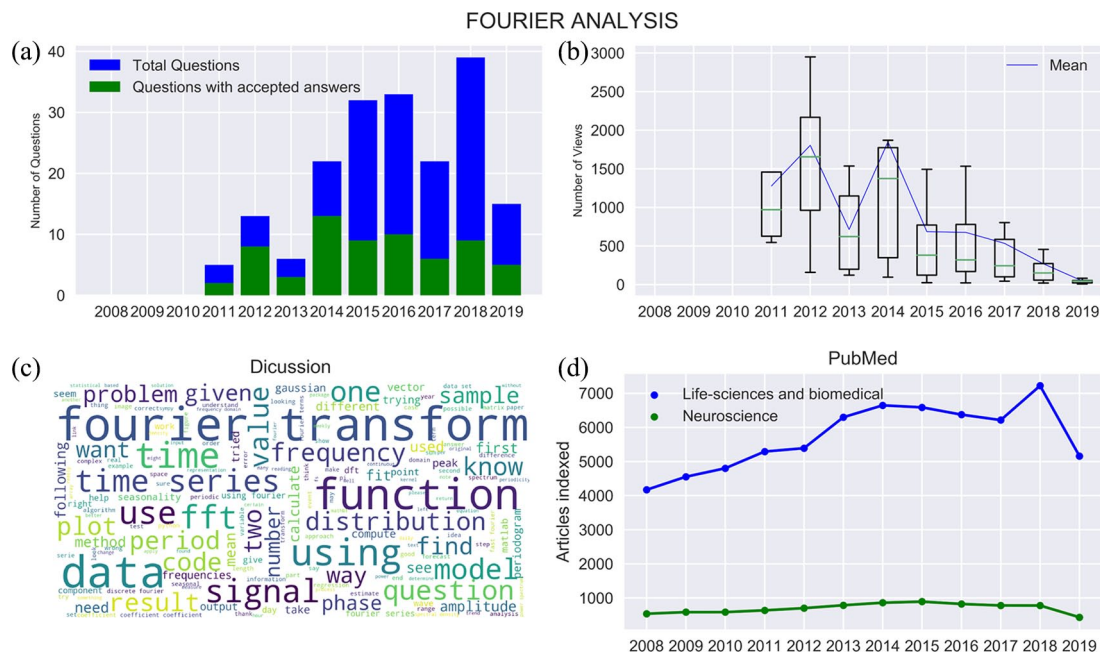


Figure 6. Quantification of trends related to Fourier analysis. (a) Fourier analysis related discussion started in 2011; subsequently, it acquired an average of 9 to 10 questions per year and approximately 25 accepted answers throughout the timespan with vast fluctuations. (b) Similar to the questions and accepted answers, the mean views resembles a zig-zag pattern till 2015, the fluctuations are between 1K and 1.7K views. In the end, the trend is decreasing, like other tools. The mean views across questions have been uniform throughout, and mean value lies between the IQR. (c) Word cloud depicts the significance of terms, such as signal, frequency, distribution, phase, amplitude, period, and FFT (Fast Fourier Transform). Notably, an emphasis on signal processing is observed. (d) Although questions on SO and CV are low, a multitude of articles indexed is on the PUBMED. In 2008, approximately 4K life-sciences and biomedical research utilized Fourier analysis; in addition, 7K articles were observed in 2018. The graph follows an increasing trend. For neuroscience, the data delineated 500 research articles in 2008 and 1000 in 2018.

undesirable. To escape this deformity, it is mandatory to smoothen these signals before differentiating them to avoid the introduction of noise.

The observed time series was decomposed by means of SSA into several additive series, such that each series represents a part of modulated signal or random noise.

Oropeza and Sacchi came up with Multichannel singular spectrum analysis (MSSA), which is used for concurrent seismic denoising and reconstruction of the data.¹⁴⁴ They used the concepts of MSSA, which required organizing spatial data at a given temporal frequency into a block Hankel matrix. Ideally, the Hankel matrix is of rank k , where k is the number of plane waves in the window of analysis. Additive noise and missing data increase the rank of the block Hankel matrix. Therefore, the rank reduction method is used as a means of noise attenuation and recovering missing traces. They presented an iterative algorithm similar to seismic data reconstruction with the method of projection onto convex sets.

Additionally, they proposed the idea of using randomized singular value decomposition to accelerate the rank reduction stage of the algorithm. They applied the MSSA reconstruction algorithm on synthetic examples to test the capabilities of this technique on 2 different samples: noise-free data and noisy data. The results showed very low reconstruction errors in both cases, which is an optimal resolution. They also examined a field dataset containing a 2D pre-stack volume that depended

upon common midpoints and offsets to find the missing offsets, and simultaneously increase the signal-to-noise ratio of the seismic volume.

The study involving the application of SSA on economic data details 2 approaches for forecasting a noisy time series.¹⁴⁵ First, disregard the noise and proceed with forecasting, and second, filter the noise time series for the reduction of noise, and then proceed with forecasting. The latter has proven to be more effective.

Single-Valued Decomposition-based methods have been very successful at reducing the noise in deterministic time series. According to the research, economic and financial time series can be regarded as linearly deterministic, which implies that they can undergo modeling and forecasting. In some cases, financial time series was found to be non-linear, which means having a model that can handle both linear and non-linear time series is required. SSA satisfies all the aforementioned constraints. Therefore, SSA is a nonparametric tool that incorporates the features of conventional time series analysis, multivariate statistics, multivariate geometry, dynamical systems, and signal processing.

Inferences from PubMed: Spectral analysis was used in quantitative temporal analysis of hypoxic regions in human glioblastoma, one of the most common types of primary brain tumors.¹²² The authors identify the hypoxic regions of the brain affected

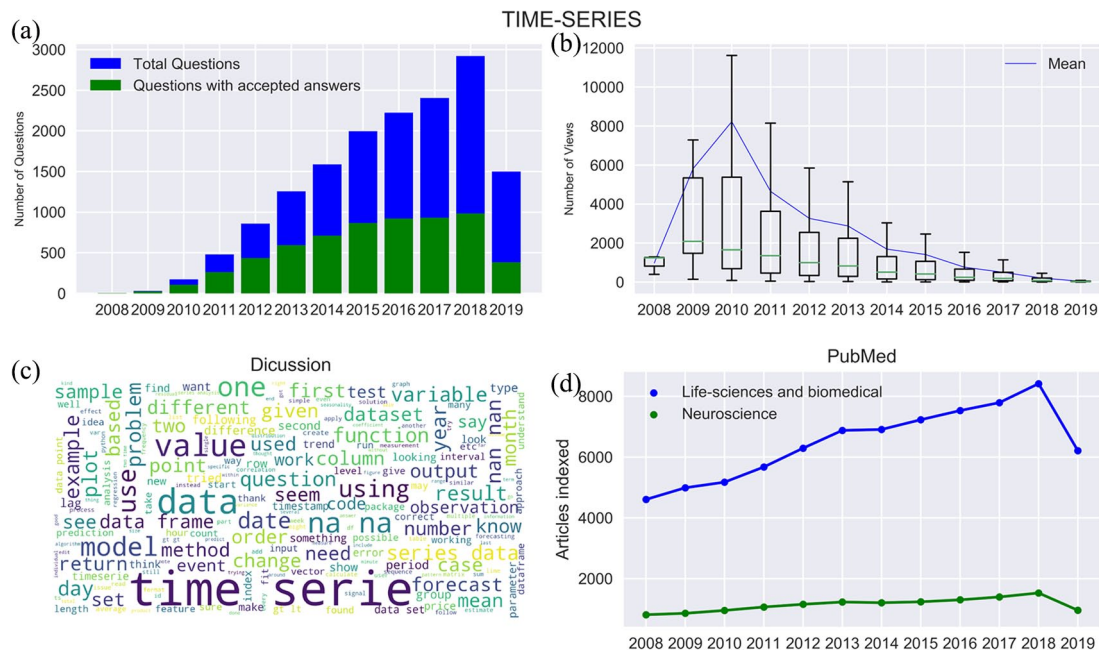


Figure 8. Quantification of trends related to time series. (a) We observe a steady increment in questions from 2009 to 2018, whereas the increment in accepted answers becomes stagnant in 2016–2017, they subsequently became constant. This shows an increment in their usage in the past decade. This may be attributed to the emerging data science as a promising field, which considers time series an integral part of prediction and forecasting. (b) The time series tag gains the highest mean views per question in 2010, along with that the IQR is approximately 4K. Subsequently, we observe a decrement in the number of views; however, it has bagged the highest number of accepted answers in 2018. (c) The frequently used words are data, value, model, variable, data frame, function, result, nan, period, mean, and forecast. All of these words are related to either time series modeling or forecasting. Notably, nan represents the missing data in the time series. (d) For life sciences and biomedical, we observe an increasing graph from 4.5K in 2008 to 8.5K in 2018, approximately, whereas for neuroscience, it increases from 0.2K to 1.8K, approximately.

PubMed. It also sums up varied utilization all over the world, sharing ideas and giving a better idea of future scope.

Questions: Almost all the time series tools have marked their presence in 2008 or 2009 except ARMA-ARIMA and Fourier, which made their debut in 2011. Subsequently, an increment in the number of questions asked and accepted answers are observed. A few time series tools have shown a particular pattern or trend in their increment, whereas the trend in the rest of them was random. Most of them show a linear increment in questions asked (Figures 3 and 8), such as ARMA-ARIMA, whereas PCA and Spectral Analysis resemble a bell-curve (Figure 1). The growth in Markov and HMM has become constant after approximately 25 questions in 2012. For accepted answers, we observe that PCA, Spectral, and ARMA-ARIMA follow a rough linear increment with little or no fluctuations.

Conversely, Fourier transformation shows no trend and exhibits high fluctuations in the number of questions asked and accepted answers. Neural Network is the only time series tool that shows a polynomial growth in terms of questions asked and accepted answers. The neural network has always been a hot topic for research, and its application in various fields garnered questions over a range of 1K to 4K. Recent advancements in neural networks include a combination of CNN (Convolution Neural Network), RNN (Recurrent Neural Network) with artificial intelligence. This makes the neural network the most popular time series tool in SO and

CV. The range of questions asked and accepted answers have been maximum for neural network followed by PCA and ARMA-ARIMA. In contrast, tools, such as Spectral, Markov, and HMM, gather 0 to 50 questions (Figures 5–7).

Views: With the advent of time series tools in Q&A websites, they gain a considerable amount of high views per question and IQR. This suggests that IT-practitioners and researchers were looking for a platform to discuss these tools, and websites, such as SO and CV, facilitated them. Notably, for most of the time series tools, almost 75% of the questions have less viewership than the other 25%; thus, we observe that the mean views, that is, susceptible to extreme values, are generally above the third quartile. All the tools have witnessed a considerable decline in the mean viewership and IQR after 2011, which subsequently become negligible in the last few years. Fourier analysis, Spectral analysis, and Markov chain have very fluctuating mean viewership, whereas other tools are associated with an increment in the viewership at the beginning and a subsequent decline. Notably, a decline in mean views per question and subsequent increment in the number of questions suggest a nearly constant viewership, which is dispersed by the increment in the questions. In addition, it also suggests that the participation by the community is increasing, that is, more users are asking questions. Generally, views are in the range of 5K and 35K for PCA, which has fewer questions than the neural network; the mean viewership of the neural network lies in the range of 5K and 20K. Although some tools have fewer



Figure 9. Comparison among time series tools. (a) In terms of questions asked and accepted answers, the neural network has recorded the most units, followed by PCA, ARMA-ARIMA, Markov models, HMM, Spectral, and Fourier analyses. Markov model, HMM, Spectral analysis, and Fourier series have applications in the frequency domain; thus, they exhibit significant but limited presence. Contrary to other tools, the neural network and PCA find application in different types of data and problem statements, ranging from classification to dimensionality reduction. However, an exception to this is ARMA-ARIMA models, which specifically deals with time series analysis and modeling. This may be a consequence of their straightforward concept and the vast amount of research available. Notably, almost all the tools have 40% accepted answers compared to the number of questions asked. (b) PCA has the highest number of views, followed by ARMA-ARIMA and neural networks, which has almost equal mean views; however, Fourier has the least mean views. In every time series tool, we observe that 50% of the questions have less than 300 views. The easy access to the internet and social connectivity has led to ample resources related to these topics, providing users with several alternatives. Among others, this could be the reason for a decline in mean viewership per question. (c) To our surprise, Fourier is the most used time series tool in biomedical and life science research, followed by PCA, Markov model, Neural network, and ARMA-ARIMA. Conversely, the neural network is the most used time series tool in neuroscience research, followed by PCA, Fourier, Spectral, Markov, and HMM.

questions and accepted answers, they possess a considerable amount of views. For example, Spectral, HMM, and Markov have approximately 10 to 20 questions and approximately 30 to 40 accepted answers (Figures 5-7); however, they have garnered approximately 5K as the highest mean views.

PubMed Analysis: The majority of the tools follow a non-decreasing trend in both biomedical and neuroscience domains. The increment in the use of these tools in neuroscience has not been substantial. However, the neural network shows peculiar polynomial growth in the life-science and biomedical domains. In addition, the neural network has witnessed substantial increment in terms of research indexed, especially related to neuroscience. There are a lot of research papers available regarding their applications in forecasting,^{133,134} pattern and image recognition,^{135,136} classification, and deep learning.⁴⁵ One such breakthrough occurred in 2011 when rectifier neurons¹³⁷ were presented as a better model for the biological neuron leading to equal or better performance. Except for HMM, all the other tools have a linearly increasing trend in biomedical and life sciences; however, the increment in neuroscience is gradual. Notably, although the tools like Spectral and Fourier analyses do not mark a significant presence in SO and CV, these tools have ample indexed papers in PubMed. It implies their

considerable use in these domains. Fourier has been used in the analysis of signals from dynamic antral scintigraphy¹³⁸ for antral contraction rate estimation using empirical mode decomposition (EMD). Spectral analysis is used in the analysis of oscillations coming from the brain, which plays a key role in neural communication and computation. Often these oscillations are assumed to be sinusoidal. For example, in this study,¹³ non-sinusoidal features have been characterized, followed by providing crucial information to gain psychological features related to neural communication. In addition, PCA has abundant papers indexed; however, HMM and ARMA-ARIMA are the only tools with fewer indexed papers (Figure 9).

Most of these tools were used in combination with some other tools, not as an individual tool, especially Neural Networks and PCA, as they find application in both time and frequency domains.

Our analysis shows that a continuous rise in usage is not accompanied by a similar rise in questions with the accepted answer. Trends in the application of these tools from the biomedical and neuroscience perspective would introduce respective researchers to the current usage patterns of these resources. We hope this analysis would be useful for a wide range of professionals, ranging from IT-practitioners to Neuroscientists, in

facilitating them with the right choice of tools. Also, it will guide to fill lacunae.

Acknowledgements

Authors acknowledge sincere efforts of Akshat Garg (Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Sector 128) for his help in the curation of this research.

Author Contributions

HG and AKK conducted the study and wrote the paper. HG scraped the data and created the visualizations. SK edited the paper. All three authors designed the study.

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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

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