



# Benchmarking scientific journals

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# Why benchmarking

- Journals can be seen as service providers to authors
- Often authors base their decision where to submit on very incomplete information
- Those open access journals which provide good service (speed, readership) should benefit from benchmarking



# Why benchmarking

- Good Open Access journals (and traditional journals proving good value for submitting authors) would benefit from better informed author choices



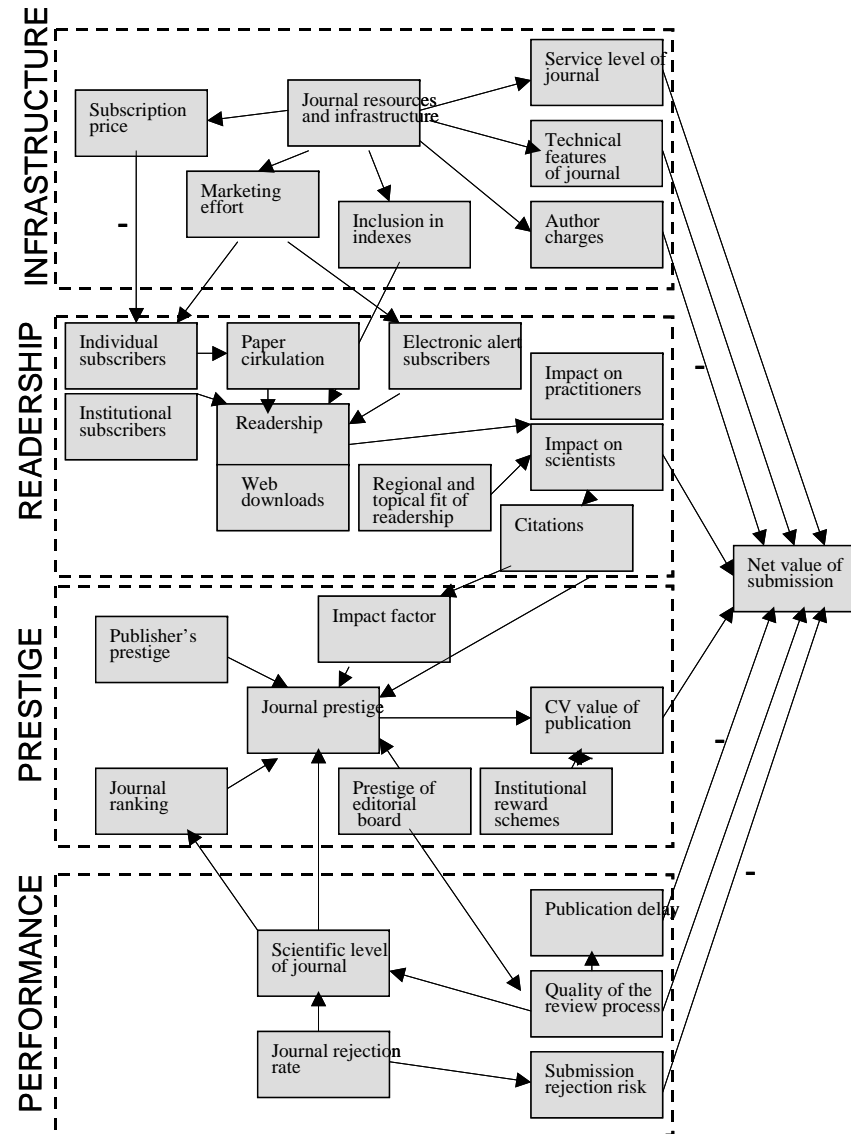
# Overview of this presentation

- A framework of factors affecting author choice of journal
- How can different factors in the framework be measured
- Testing the method on cluster of journals



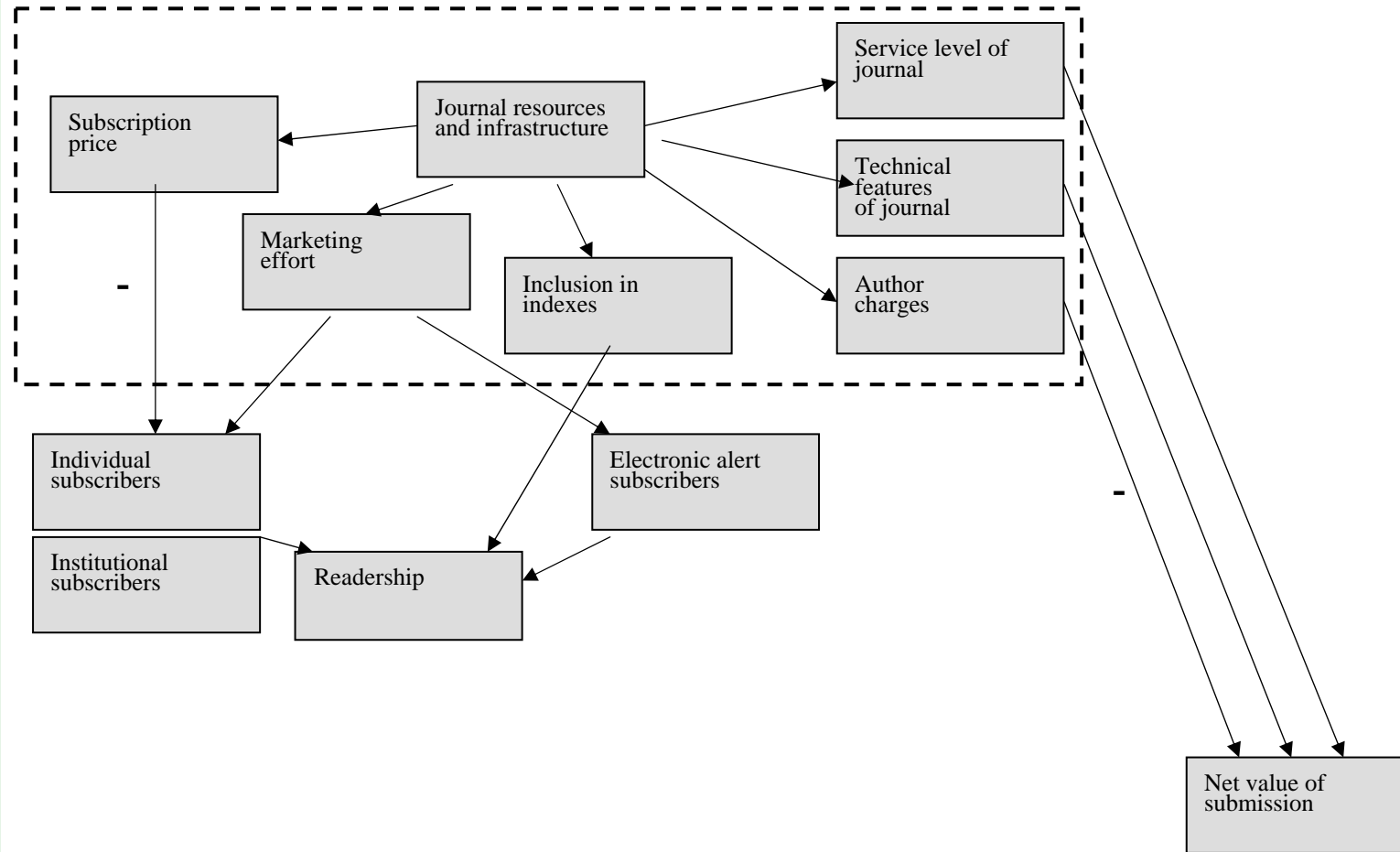
# "Net value of submission"

- Infrastructure
- Readership
- Prestige
- Performance



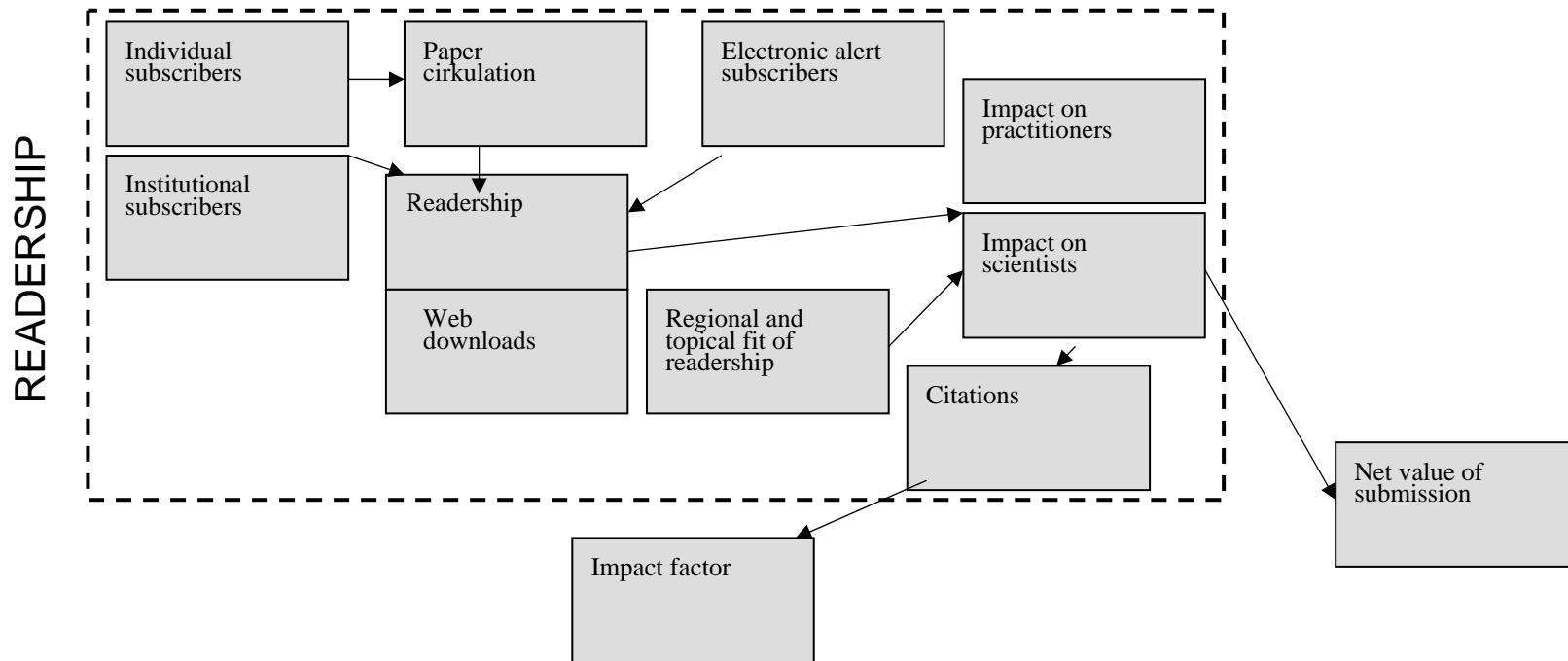


# Infrastructure factors



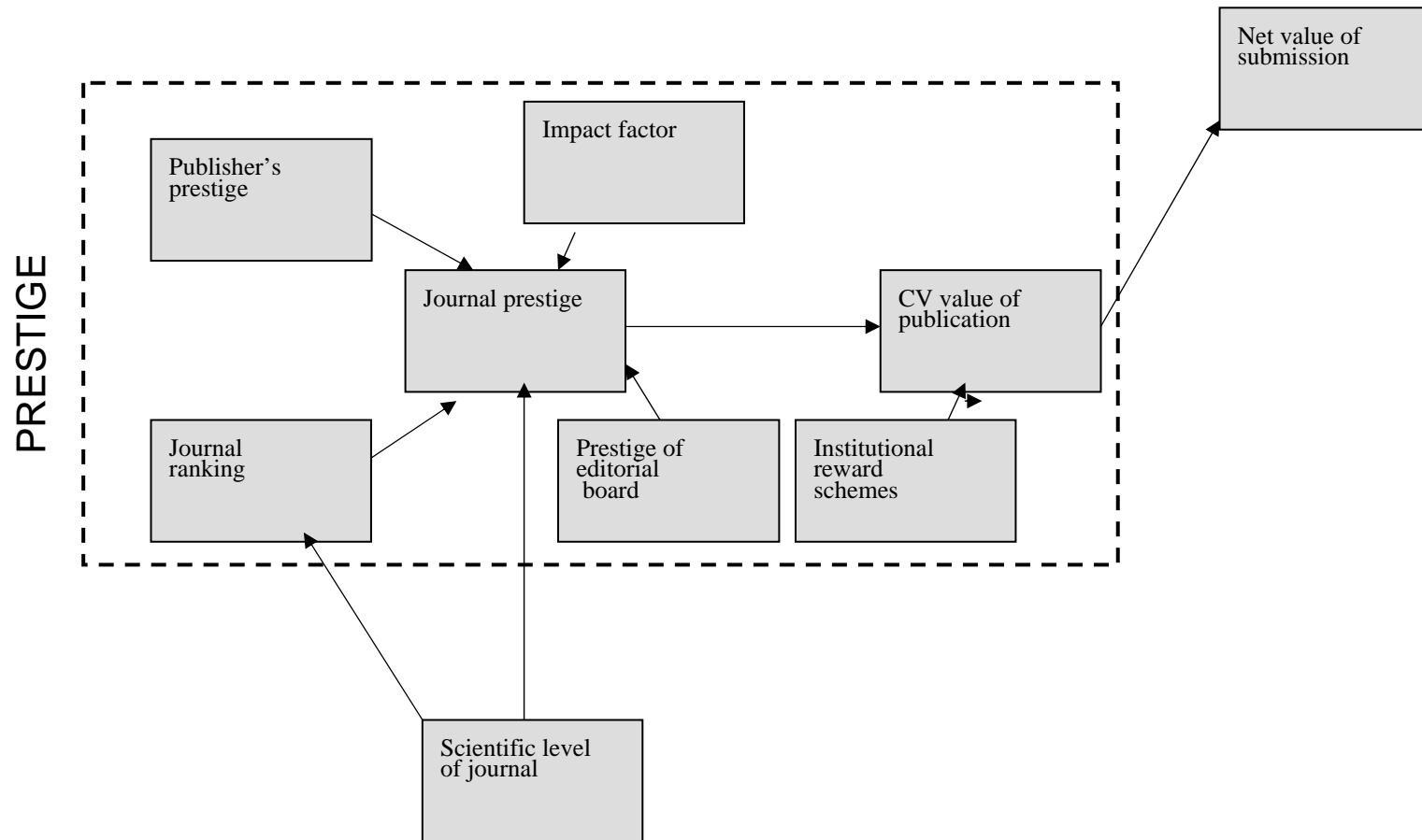


# Readership factors



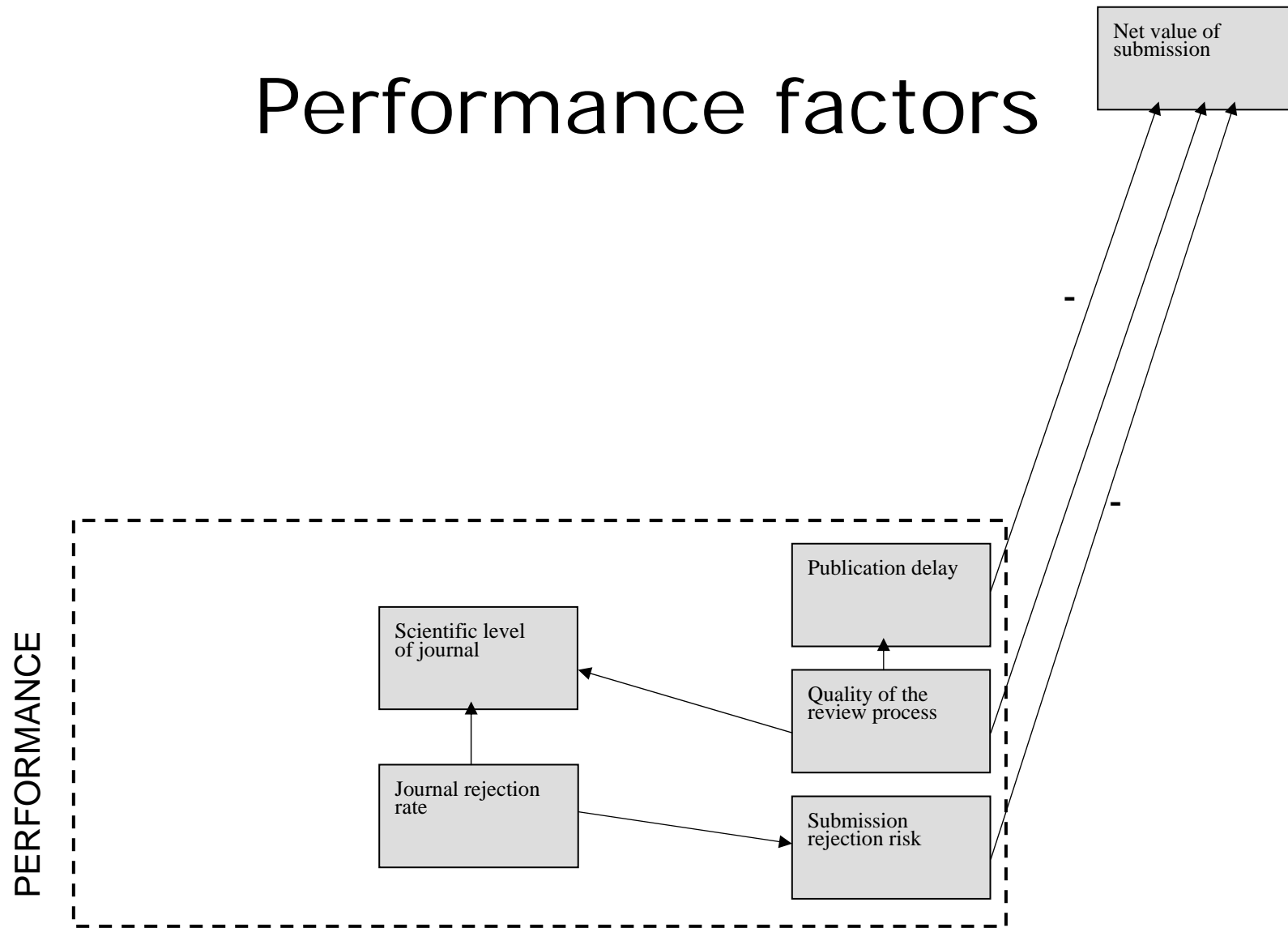


# Prestige factors





# Performance factors





# The use of proxies

- Several factors are difficult to measure or its difficult to obtain the info
- For these other factors in the causal chain can be used as proxies in a non-scientific way



## Subscription price as a proxy for readership

- Subscription price is an indicator of the number of subscriptions and thus the total amount of readership
- The higher the price the lower the number of subscriptions and thus the amount of readership is likely to be
- The combination of price + Impact factor (or lack of it) tells quite a lot



# Figure based on our study

- Price
- Impact factor
- Make from Excel



# Infrastructure factors

- Journal resources and infra
- Subscription price
- Marketing effort
- Inclusion in indexes
- Service level of journal (+)
- Technical features of journal
- Author charges



# How can the factors be measured

- Immediately available
- Can be calculated from available data
- Can be obtained from publishers
- Author surveys

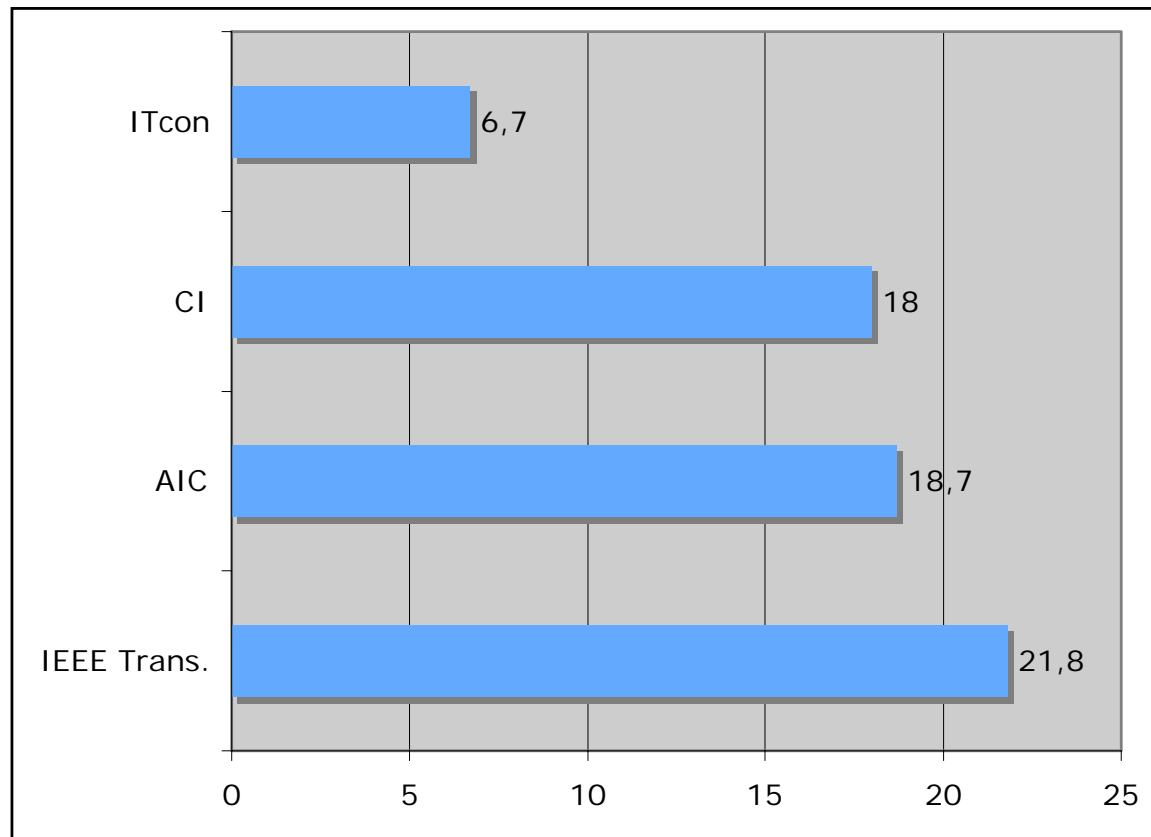


# A first test of the method

- Seven journals in the domain of IT applications in construction
- Data for some other closely related journal were also included



# Speed of publication (months)



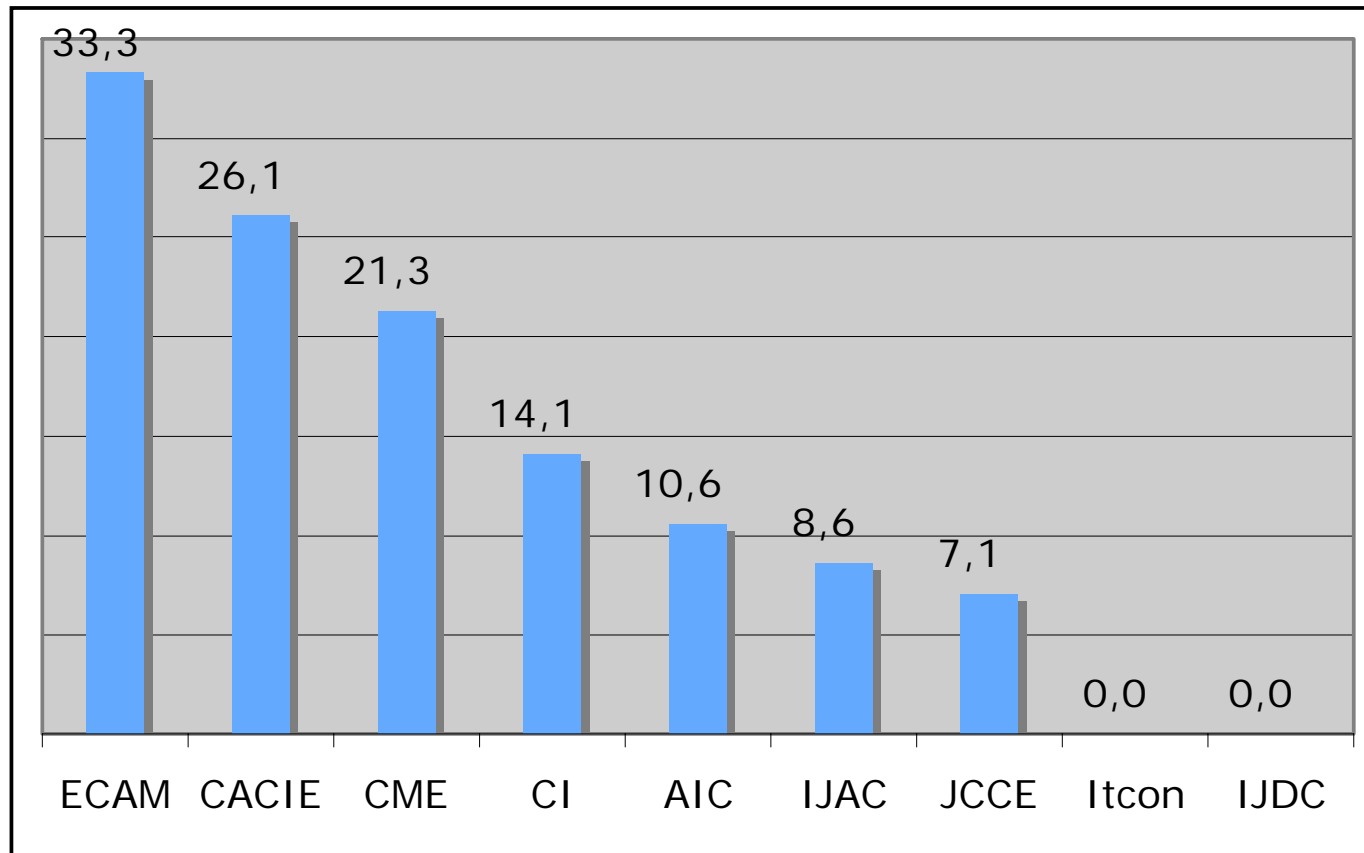


# Acceptance rates

- ITcon 0,55
- CME 0,51
- JCCE 0,47
- ALPSP journals 0,42
- DOAJ 0,64
- DOAJ Excluding  
BiomedCentral  
and ISP journals 0,55

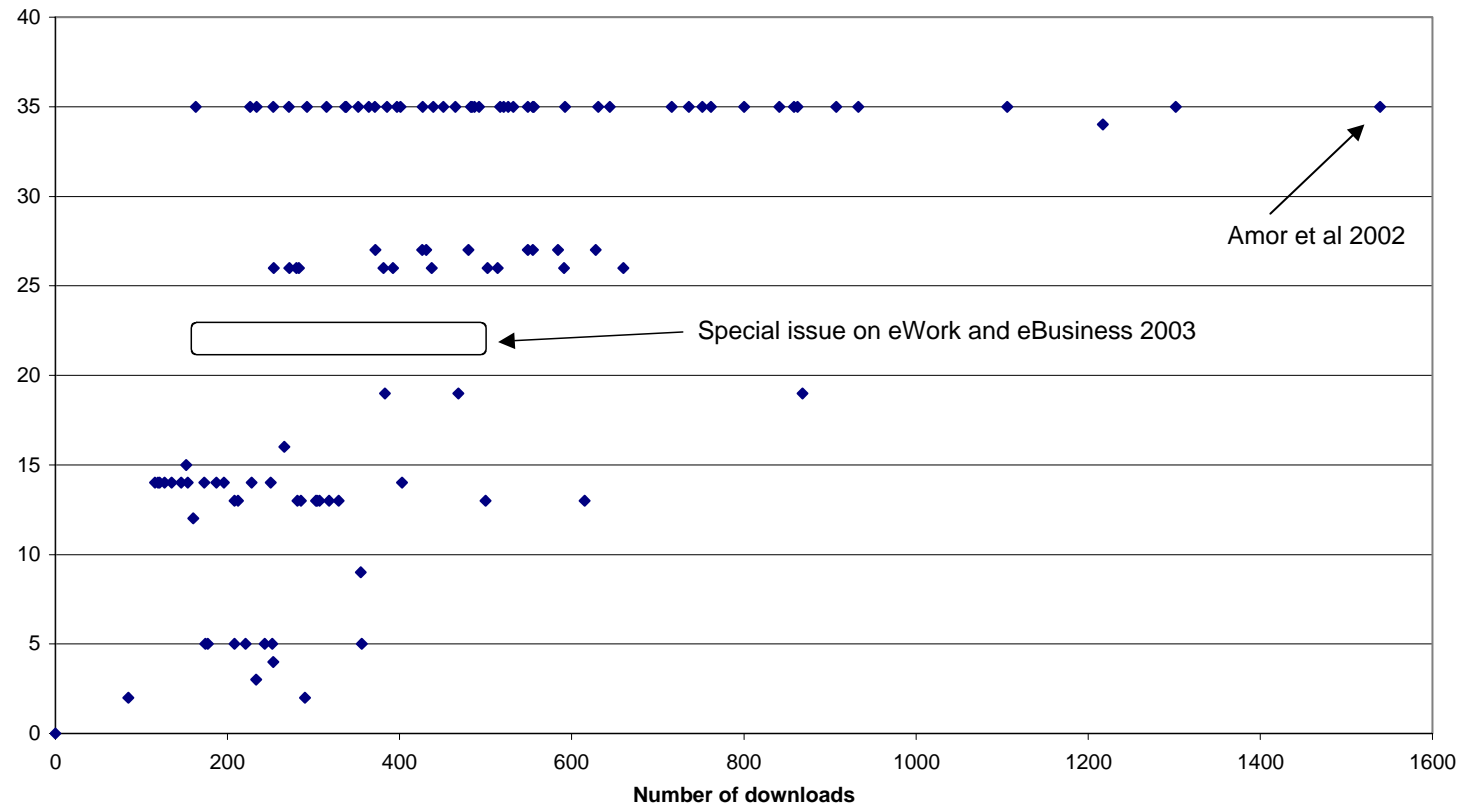


# Price per article (Euros)





Number of downloads vs. months on-line





# Conclusions

- The method should be used for closely-related journals which are substitutes
- Measuring readership is very difficult
- DOAJ could enhance its website to allow journals to post data about performance



# Futher work

- The method is currently being applied to e-commerce journals
- Should be tested for areas where there are open access alternatives (biomedicine?)



## EC study requests this type of information!

- European Commission study published 31.3.2006
- Recommendation A3 "Extended Quality rankings of scientific journals"
- "While scientific quality, approximated for example by citation counts, should remain the dominant criterion, dimensions related to the quality of dissemination ... could be tracked explicitly and possibly valued by research funding bodies"



# REFERENCES

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