



## Scientific Inquiry and Review (SIR)

Volume 4, Issue 2, June 2020

ISSN (P): 2521-2427, ISSN (E): 2521-2435

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32350/sir>

Issue DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32350/sir.42>

Homepage: <https://journals.umt.edu.pk/index.php/SIR/Home>

Journal QR Code:



### Article

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Online

June 2020

Published

Article DOI

<https://doi.org/10.32350/sir.42.02>

QR Code  
of Article



Muhammad Saeed

To cite this  
Article

Saeed M, Ali U, Dayan F. A comparative study of FCSM, FSAW and TOPSIS techniques using triangular fuzzy numbers. *Sci Inquiry Rev.* 2020;4(2):17–30.

[Crossref](#)

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A publication of the  
School of Science, University of Management and Technology  
Lahore, Pakistan.

Indexing  
&  
Abstracting



# A Comparative Study of FCSM, FSAW and TOPSIS Techniques using Triangular Fuzzy Numbers

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## Abstract

*This paper presents a comparative study of different techniques used for fuzzy multi-criteria expert's decision-making (FMCEDM). These include CSM1, CSM2, CSM3, FSAW, and TOPSIS. We developed the methods CSM1 and CSM3 respectively and studied their validity by comparing their illustration results with that of CSM2, FSAW and TOPSIS. Expert's ratings and weights were assigned in linguistic variables in terms of triangular fuzzy numbers (TFNs) to the FMCEDM problem. Airport performance evaluation and a personnel selection problem were studied as alternatives under different decision criteria and experts.*

**Keywords:** Fuzzy Multiple Criteria Expert Decision-Making (FMCEDM), fuzzy simple additive weighting, fuzzy cosine similarity measures, technique for order performance by similarity to ideal solution

## Introduction

Several researchers have presented extremely useful analytical models to deal with the situations involving conflict management. Multi-criteria experts decision making (MCEDM) is a methodology available to deal with these situations [1]. Decision-makers have described the aims and objectives to select the final best option provided as an alternative. The category of MCEDM is highlighted and the administrators are called “decision-makers”. They have a direct influence on the solution anticipated by the technical division [2]. The choice is usually taken with reference to political considerations, discarding completely the solution proposed based on some technical principles and/or criteria [3]. Hence, a system analyst can assist the process of decision-making by carrying out an all-inclusive analysis of the problem [4]. Indeed, a lot of disproportionate data is involved which makes it difficult to accept a solution suggested by a specific technique.

TOPSIS, FCSM and FSAW are among the foremost methods adopted to solve the FMCEDM issues. All these techniques are helpful for experts to formulate difficulties, perform analysis, and suggest the preferred order of alternatives [5]. These techniques are extensively used due to their logicity, rationality, and computational ease. During the past decade, TOPSIS, FCSM and FSAW have been effectively applied to the areas of inter-company comparison, performance evaluation, weapon selection, customer evaluation, personnel selection, machine selection, desired location selection, supplier evaluation, risk management and many others [6,7].

Similarity measures between two fuzzy sets have been under study for several years. The extent of being similar or dissimilar with the alternatives plays an important role in decision-making [8]. In vector space, FCSM is widely used in reference analysis as well as in automatic sorting and information recovery. However, it rarely deals with triangular fuzzy information and FMCEDM problems. With the help of the expected weight and weighted FCSM between each available alternative and the ideal alternative, we can determine the preference order of all alternatives and the best can be easily figured out [9, 10].

FSAW method is known as the simplest and the clearest method. It is often used as a benchmark to compare the results obtained from this method and other FMCEDM methods when applied to the same problem. TOPSIS approaches uniquely and in a very logical way to solve the FMCEDM problem. However, it is computationally more complex as compared to FSAW and Cosine similarity measures. SAW, FCSM and TOPSIS require the quantification of performance attributes for particular alternatives. For these methods, the weights used to express the relative importance of attributes can be determined either analytically or empirically by the decision-maker himself [11, 12].

Since TFNs are instinctive, computationally simple, easy to handle, useful to exemplify and process the data in a fuzzy environment, they can be conveniently applied to solve FMCEDM problems in which the values of criteria and weights are supported by TFNs [13]. In the current study, we developed FCSM1 and FCSM3 techniques and then applied these techniques on the best performing airport [14] and personnel selection [15] problems. The results were then compared with the results of these problems when solved with already developed

techniques of FCSM2, FSAW and TOPSIS [16]. Zulqarnain et al. [17] applied interval valued fuzzy soft matrix to solve a decision-making problem. They also made a comparison between fuzzy soft matrix and interval valued fuzzy soft matrix in decision-making [18]. Zulqarnain et al. also developed a new decision-making method using interval valued fuzzy soft matrix [19]. Zulqarnain et al. have used TOPSIS analysis for the prediction of diabetes based on the general characteristics of human beings [20].

Currently, researchers are focused on the development of new theories to solve MCDM problems. Zulqarnain et al. applied interval valued fuzzy soft max-min decision-making method for decision-making in medical diagnosis [21]. Zulqarnain et al. also applied TOPSIS method in the recruitment of medical staff in health department, car selection and the selection of medical clinic for disease diagnosis [22, 23].

Muhammad Saeed et al. developed a new technique known as fuzzy soft relative method [24]. They discovered the maximal set and applied it to FS-set to get a relative set containing relative fuzzy approximation functions values. FS-relative operator was generated and the values were applied to the maximal set by FS-relative operator to get a single relative fuzzy set. The method was applied to find the optimum solution for selecting the best teacher in a high school based on teacher specific characteristics. Dayan F. and Zulqarnain M. applied generalized fuzzy soft sets and generalized fuzzy soft matrices in decision-making [25, 26].

## 2. Preliminaries

### 2.1. Definition

Let  $S$  be a universal set. The fuzzy set  $A$  of  $S$  is a function that maps every element of  $A$  to a closed interval  $[0, 1]$ .

### 2.2. Definition

A triangular fuzzy number (TFN) is a fuzzy number with a piecewise linear membership function  $\alpha_A$  defined as follows:

$$\alpha_A = \begin{cases} \frac{a-e_1}{e_2-e_1}, & e_1 \leq a \leq e_2 \\ \frac{e_3-a}{e_3-e_2}, & e_2 \leq a \leq e_3 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

This can be denoted as triplet  $(e_1, e_2, e_3)$ .

### 3. Cosine Similarity Measures

#### 3.1. CSM Method 1

We developed a method of CSM between TFNs for FMCGDM problem with fuzzy weights. This method for trapezoidal numbers was proposed by Jun Ye [27]; however, we developed it for TFNs and applied it on the best airport performance problem and personnel selection problem to compare our outcomes.

Let  $A = \{A_1, A_2, \dots, A_s\}$  and  $C = \{C_1, C_2, \dots, C_t\}$  be the sets of criteria and alternatives, respectively. The preference value of  $C_j$  ( $j = 1, 2, \dots, t$ ), a criterion on  $A_i$  ( $i = 1, 2, \dots, s$ ), an alternative is a TFN  $a_{ij} = (e_{ij1}, e_{ij2}, e_{ij3})$ , where  $i = 1, 2, \dots, t$ ,  $j = 1, 2, \dots, s$ ,  $e_{ij1}, e_{ij2}, e_{ij3} \in R$  and  $e_{ij1} \leq e_{ij2} \leq e_{ij3}$ , which shows the extent to which  $A_i$  fulfills  $C_j$  by the expert decision according to previously assessed criteria.

The normalization of criteria values is achieved to eliminate the disparity between data values. This normalization is achieved by using expected value operator in order to obtain decision matrix  $A = (e_{ij})_{m \times n}$ . Moreover, the fuzzy weight vector is also normalized.

The criteria can be of two types. It can be a profit criterion and a cost criterion respectively in the FMCGDM problem.

(1) For Benefit Criterion

$$f_{ij} = \frac{s_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^m (E(s_{ij}))^2}}$$

(2) For Cost Criterion

$$f_{ij} = \frac{m_j - s_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^m (E(m_j - s_{ij}))^2}}$$

This will give us normalized decision matrix. Now, the weight vector  $w = (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n)$  is obtained as follows:

$$w_j = \frac{E(w_j)}{\sum_{j=1}^n E(w_j)}$$

which satisfies the conditions

$$w_j \geq 0, \text{ and } \sum_{j=1}^n w_j = 1$$

Next, we define an ideal TFN “I” as  $f_j^* = (1, 1, 1)$  and

$$C(I, A_i) = \sum_{j=1}^n w_j \frac{\sum_{m=1}^3 f_{jm}^* f_{ijm}}{\sqrt{\sum_{m=1}^3 (f_{jm}^*)^2} \sqrt{\sum_{m=1}^3 (f_{ijm})^2}}$$

### 3.2. CSM Method 2

Let  $C = \{C_1, C_2, \dots, C_n\}$  and  $A = \{A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n\}$  be the sets of criteria and alternatives, respectively. Experts are then required to make the decision. Let  $E = \{E_1, E_2, \dots, E_p\}$  be a set of experts. They will anticipate the linguistic value of TFNs [15]. The alternative vectors given by  $E = \{E_1, E_2, \dots, E_p\}$  are represented by TFNs. In this method, weights are also assigned to different experts as  $\alpha = \{\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_p\}$ . Expert opinion vector will be calculated as follows:

$$V_i = \left\{ \left\langle C_1, \left( \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i11}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i12}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i13}^k \right) \right\rangle, \left\langle C_2, \left( \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i21}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i22}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{i23}^k \right) \right\rangle, \dots, \right. \\ \left. \left\langle C_n, \left( \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{in1}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{in2}^k, \sum_{k=1}^p \alpha_k a_{in3}^k \right) \right\rangle \right\}$$

After obtaining the decision matrix, weights normalization is achieved as described in the above method. We can obtain our results using the Cosine similarity formula.

### 3.3. CSM Method 3

We developed this method by eliminating the procedure of normalizing the criteria values in Method 1 and using them directly to obtain the Cosine similarity measure between them. All three CSM methods were applied on the best airport performance evaluation and personnel selection problem to compare and analyze the outcomes.

### 3.4. SAW Methodology

In this method, we determined our decision matrix by converting our linguistic terms matrix decided by experts into TFNs [28]. Then, we determined  $A_{ij}$  which comprises the average fuzzy scores,  $e$  which comprises de-fuzzified values, and  $W_i$  which comprises the normalized weights of each criteria using the following formulae:

$$\alpha_i = (\alpha_{i1} + \alpha_{i2} + \dots + \alpha_{in}), \beta_i = (\beta_{i1} + \beta_{i2} + \dots + \beta_{in})$$

and

$$\mu_i = (\mu_{i1} + \mu_{i2} + \dots + \mu_{in}); i = 1, 2 \dots m$$

$$\text{De-fuzzified values } e_i = \frac{1}{3}(\alpha_i + \beta_i + \mu_i); i = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

Experts allotted suitable ratings in the form of linguistic variables to each attribute  $A_k$ ;  $k = 1, 2, \dots, p$  for all the criteria. Then, they calculated the average fuzzy scores and de-fuzzified scores of each alternative against each criterion. Afterwards, a decision matrix for all the criteria and attributes  $[X_{ij}]$  was calculated and we normalized the decision matrix using  $[R_{ij}] = x_{ij} / \max(x_{1j}, x_{2j}, x_{3j}, \dots, x_{mj})$ . We obtained column matrix for each alternative using  $TS = [R_{ij}] [W_j]$ . The final column matrix will show the preference order of each alternative and the greatest value will preferably be the best one for the selection.

#### 4. Illustrations

In this section, we discuss two FMCGDM problems and apply the above discussed methods and compare our results.

##### 4.1. Airport Selection Problem

Here, we took an illustration based on example [14]. TOPSIS technique was already applied by Wanga and Lee in which three airports  $A_1$ ,  $A_2$  and  $A_3$  were taken as alternatives by the experts  $E_1$ ,  $E_2$ ,  $E_3$  and  $E_4$  in a FTN's for operation performance against 15 criteria,  $c_1, c_2, \dots, c_{15}$ .

$C_1$ : profit return

$C_2$ : coziness and neatness of the airport

$C_3$ : passenger's carriage approach

$C_4$ : indicator and guidance

$C_5$ : airfield control

$C_6$ : safety procedures

$C_7$ : reception and check-out time

$C_8$ : airliners' departure and stacking time

$C_9$ : traffic flow connecting city or out-bound

$C_{10}$ : politeness of aircrew

$C_{11}$ : parking area

$C_{12}$ : airport weighbridge

$C_{13}$ : direction finding apparatus

$C_{14}$ : sound pollution control

$C_{15}$ : aircraft security control

Linguistic values of TFNs for weights being used are  $Ee = (0,0,0.3)$ ,  $Dd = (0,0.3,0.5)$ ,  $Cc = (0.3,0.5,0.7)$ ,  $Bb = (0.5,0.7,1)$ ,  $Aa = (0.7,1,1)$  and for performance rating we have  $R_7 = (0,0,0.2)$ ,  $R_6 = (0,0.2,0.4)$ ,  $R_5 = (0.2,0.4,0.5)$ ,  $R_4 = (0.4,0.5,0.6)$ ,  $R_3 = (0.5,0.6,0.8)$ ,  $R_2 = (0.6,0.8,1)$ ,  $R_1 = (0.8,1,1)$

**Table 1.** Linguistic Weights Table

| Criteria\Experts | $E_1$ | $E_2$ | $E_3$ | $E_4$ |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| $C_1$            | $Cc$  | $Aa$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  |
| $C_2$            | $Bb$  | $Bb$  | $Cc$  | $Aa$  |
| $C_3$            | $Cc$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Cc$  |
| $C_4$            | $Dd$  | $Cc$  | $Aa$  | $Cc$  |
| $C_5$            | $Aa$  | $Aa$  | $Aa$  | $Aa$  |
| $C_6$            | $Aa$  | $Bb$  | $Aa$  | $Aa$  |
| $C_7$            | $Bb$  | $Aa$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  |
| $C_8$            | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Aa$  | $Cc$  |
| $C_9$            | $Cc$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Cc$  |
| $C_{10}$         | $Dd$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Aa$  |
| $C_{11}$         | $Aa$  | $Bb$  | $Aa$  | $Cc$  |
| $C_{12}$         | $Bb$  | $Bb$  | $Cc$  | $Dd$  |
| $C_{13}$         | $Bb$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Bb$  |
| $C_{14}$         | $Cc$  | $Bb$  | $Cc$  | $Bb$  |
| $C_{15}$         | $Bb$  | $Aa$  | $Bb$  | $Aa$  |

Linguistic weights were evaluated by expert  $E_j$  under criterion  $C_i$ , where  $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$ ;  $j = 1, 2, \dots, p$ . These are given in Table 1. Linguistic performance ratings were evaluated by experts and these are given in Table 2. These linguistic terms were then converted into triangular fuzzy numbers given above and then decision matrix was evaluated according to the methods [29, 30].



The best alternative and ranking order of FSAW, CSM2, and CSM3 is the same, whereas CSM1 and TOPSIS have the same best alternative but a different ranking order (Table 3).

**Table 2** Linguistic Performance Rating Table

| $(E_1, E_2, \text{Alternatives}$<br>$E_3, E_4) \setminus \text{Criteria}$ | $A_1$                  | $A_2$                  | $A_3$                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| $C_1$                                                                     | $(R_3, R_2, R_2, R_1)$ | $(R_1, R_2, R_3, R_3)$ | $(R_3, R_4, R_3, R_4)$ |
| $C_2$                                                                     | $(R_3, R_1, R_2, R_3)$ | $(R_2, R_2, R_1, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_1, R_2, R_2)$ |
| $C_3$                                                                     | $(R_4, R_4, R_4, R_3)$ | $(R_1, R_2, R_3, R_2)$ | $(R_1, R_1, R_2, R_2)$ |
| $C_4$                                                                     | $(R_1, R_2, R_1, R_1)$ | $(R_4, R_3, R_3, R_3)$ | $(R_3, R_3, R_2, R_3)$ |
| $C_5$                                                                     | $(R_2, R_3, R_4, R_2)$ | $(R_3, R_2, R_4, R_2)$ | $(R_4, R_1, R_2, R_3)$ |
| $C_6$                                                                     | $(R_1, R_2, R_1, R_1)$ | $(R_3, R_1, R_2, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_4, R_3, R_2)$ |
| $C_7$                                                                     | $(R_4, R_2, R_3, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_3, R_1, R_3)$ | $(R_1, R_3, R_1, R_2)$ |
| $C_8$                                                                     | $(R_3, R_1, R_3, R_2)$ | $(R_1, R_4, R_1, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_2, R_1, R_3)$ |
| $C_9$                                                                     | $(R_1, R_2, R_2, R_1)$ | $(R_3, R_2, R_2, R_1)$ | $(R_1, R_2, R_1, R_1)$ |
| $C_{10}$                                                                  | $(R_2, R_2, R_2, R_4)$ | $(R_2, R_3, R_2, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_1, R_2, R_3)$ |
| $C_{11}$                                                                  | $(R_3, R_1, R_3, R_3)$ | $(R_1, R_3, R_2, R_3)$ | $(R_1, R_3, R_2, R_2)$ |
| $C_{12}$                                                                  | $(R_2, R_1, R_2, R_3)$ | $(R_1, R_2, R_1, R_2)$ | $(R_2, R_2, R_1, R_3)$ |
| $C_{13}$                                                                  | $(R_4, R_3, R_3, R_2)$ | $(R_4, R_3, R_4, R_3)$ | $(R_2, R_2, R_1, R_1)$ |
| $C_{14}$                                                                  | $(R_1, R_3, R_3, R_1)$ | $(R_3, R_3, R_2, R_1)$ | $(R_4, R_3, R_2, R_3)$ |
| $C_{15}$                                                                  | $(R_2, R_1, R_4, R_2)$ | $(R_3, R_4, R_1, R_2)$ | $(R_4, R_4, R_4, R_4)$ |

## 4.2. Personnel Selection Problem

Here is another illustration of the personnel selection problem [15]. In this problem, a company selects a person using five experts as decision-makers and four persons as alternatives under the five criteria of educational experience, work experience, emotional steadiness, oral communication skills, and personality and self-confidence. All these criteria were used to express opinions in linguistic variables and then converted into TFNs. FSAW and FCSM1 were then applied to compare results with an example already solved by FCSM2 [9].

All the above methods gave the same best alternative and ranking orders. Therefore, these techniques were found to be highly effective in the personnel selection problem (Table 4).

**Table 3.** The Results of the above Described Techniques on this Illustration

| Alternatives\<br>Techniques | FSAW           | FCSM2          | FCSM3          | FCSM1          | TOPSIS         |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| $A_1$                       | 0.916102       | 0.986476       | 0.986578       | 0.837652       | 0              |
| $A_2$                       | 0.895492       | 0.985448       | 0.985587       | 0.854223       | 1              |
| $A_3$                       | 0.909839       | 0.986202       | 0.986422       | 0.819746       | 0.7502         |
| Ranking Order               | $A1 > A3 > A2$ | $A1 > A3 > A2$ | $A1 > A3 > A2$ | $A2 > A1 > A3$ | $A2 > A3 > A1$ |

**Table 4.** Techniques' Results of Alternatives

| Alternatives \<br>Techniques | FSAW                | FCSM2                     | FCSM3               | FCSM1               |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| A1                           | 0.844402            | 0.9974                    | 0.98669             | 0.622699            |
| A2                           | 0.882324            | 0.9988                    | 0.98509             | 0.618171            |
| A3                           | 0.66693             | 0.9918                    | 0.975248            | 0.611144            |
| A4                           | 0.77901             | 0.9964                    | 0.982469            | 0.618525            |
| Ranking Order                | $A1 > A2 > A4 > A3$ | $A1 \approx A2 > A4 > A3$ | $A1 > A2 > A4 > A3$ | $A1 > A2 > A4 > A3$ |

## 5. Conclusion

The comparative application of these methods on the problems of the best airport selection on performance basis and personnel selection gave almost the same results and ranking orders. TOPSIS and FCSM1 use vector normalization, whereas FSAW involves linear normalization. It indicates that our problems don't depend on the normalization process. However, FSAW and FCSM2 both involve simple computation as compared to TOPSIS and FCSM1. It also gives us an idea that which alternatives may be the best options under the same criterion. These methods worked better in the personnel selection problem as compared to the best airport selection problem. Variance in results and ranking orders indicates that selecting an appropriate method is necessary for producing an acceptable solution.

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