Global Journal of Engineering Innovations & Interdisciplinary Research

Original Article

An Efficient Recommendation System Using Collaborative Filtering and Big Data Analytics

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- Received Date: 20 Mar 2026
- Accepted Date: 12 June 2026
- Publication Date: 15 June 2026

Abstract

The rapid growth of e-commerce platforms, online streaming services, social media applications, and digital marketplaces has resulted in an enormous increase in user-generated data and digital content. As users interact with millions of products, movies, books, music tracks, and online services, identifying personalized content has become increasingly challenging. Recommendation systems play a crucial role in filtering relevant information and improving user experience by suggesting items that match individual preferences. Traditional recommendation techniques often experience limitations when processing massive datasets due to scalability issues, sparse user ratings, and increasing computational complexity. Big Data Analytics has emerged as an effective solution by enabling efficient processing of large-scale user interactions while improving recommendation quality and computational efficiency. This paper proposes an efficient recommendation system that integrates Collaborative Filtering with Big Data Analytics to generate personalized recommendations for large-scale applications. The proposed framework utilizes Apache Spark for distributed data processing, collaborative filtering algorithms for preference prediction, and big data analytics techniques for scalable recommendation generation. User interactions, historical ratings, demographic information, and behavioral patterns are processed to identify similarities among users and items. The framework employs distributed computation to reduce processing time while maintaining high recommendation accuracy. Experimental evaluation was conducted using large-scale recommendation datasets containing millions of user-item interactions collected from e-commerce and multimedia platforms. Comparative analysis demonstrates that the proposed framework significantly improves recommendation accuracy, scalability, throughput, and execution efficiency compared with conventional recommendation approaches. The proposed system provides an intelligent and scalable solution suitable for modern big data recommendation environments.

Introduction

Recommendation systems have become indispensable components of modern digital platforms by assisting users in discovering relevant products, services, and multimedia content from massive collections of available information. Online retailers, streaming platforms, educational portals, healthcare applications, and social networking services rely extensively on recommendation engines to personalize user experiences and improve customer satisfaction. Effective recommendations not only enhance user engagement but also increase sales, content consumption, and platform profitability.

Collaborative Filtering remains one of the most widely adopted recommendation techniques due to its ability to identify user preferences based on historical interactions and behavioral similarities. User-based collaborative filtering recommends items liked by similar users, whereas item-based collaborative filtering recommends items exhibiting similar consumption patterns. Although collaborative filtering has demonstrated excellent recommendation quality, its performance degrades significantly when handling extremely large datasets because of increasing computational complexity, sparse rating matrices, and scalability challenges.

The emergence of Big Data Analytics has transformed recommendation system development by enabling distributed storage, parallel computation, and scalable processing of massive datasets. Frameworks such as Apache Hadoop and Apache Spark provide distributed computing environments capable of processing billions of user interactions efficiently. Spark's in-memory processing architecture significantly accelerates collaborative filtering algorithms while reducing latency associated with recommendation generation.

The proposed framework combines collaborative filtering algorithms with Apache Spark-based big data analytics to establish an efficient recommendation system capable of

Citation: Bolishetti AV, Vanaparthi K, Bhaskar K. An Efficient Recommendation System Using Collaborative Filtering and Big Data Analytics. GJEIIR. 2026;6(4):229.

processing large-scale user interaction datasets. The system leverages distributed computation, similarity analysis, and scalable recommendation generation to improve prediction accuracy while maintaining high computational efficiency.

Problem Statement

Traditional collaborative filtering algorithms exhibit significant scalability limitations when processing massive user-item interaction datasets. Sparse rating matrices, increasing computational complexity, prolonged execution time, and memory constraints reduce recommendation quality in large-scale recommendation systems. Therefore, an efficient recommendation framework integrating collaborative filtering with distributed big data analytics is required to improve scalability, recommendation accuracy, and computational performance.

Objective

The primary objective of this research is to design and evaluate an efficient recommendation system that combines collaborative filtering with big data analytics. The framework aims to improve recommendation accuracy, reduce execution time, enhance scalability, optimize distributed resource utilization, and support personalized recommendation generation for large-scale digital platforms.

Scope

This research focuses on recommendation generation using user-based collaborative filtering, item-based collaborative filtering, Apache Spark distributed processing, and large-scale user-item interaction datasets. The framework evaluates recommendation accuracy, computational efficiency, scalability, and throughput using structured recommendation data. Deep learning recommendation models, graph neural networks, reinforcement learning, and context-aware recommendation systems are outside the scope of this investigation.

Literature Survey

Recommendation systems have experienced substantial development with the rapid expansion of digital commerce, online entertainment platforms, and social media applications. Early recommendation approaches primarily relied on content-based filtering techniques, where recommendations were generated using item attributes such as product descriptions, genres, categories, keywords, and user profiles. Although content-based methods effectively personalized recommendations according to user preferences, they often suffered from limited recommendation diversity and overspecialization.

Collaborative Filtering subsequently emerged as one of the most successful recommendation techniques by exploiting similarities among users and items based on historical interaction data. User-based collaborative filtering identifies users with similar preferences and recommends items preferred by neighboring users, whereas item-based collaborative filtering recommends items exhibiting similar consumption patterns. These approaches significantly improved recommendation quality but encountered challenges related to sparse rating matrices, cold-start problems, and computational scalability.

The introduction of Big Data Analytics enabled recommendation systems to process massive user interaction datasets using distributed computing infrastructures. Apache Hadoop introduced the MapReduce programming model for parallel data processing, while Apache Spark further improved recommendation performance through distributed in-memory computation. Spark MLlib provided scalable implementations of collaborative filtering algorithms capable of processing millions of user-item interactions efficiently.

Recent research has explored hybrid recommendation frameworks combining collaborative filtering with matrix factorization, clustering, deep learning, and distributed analytics. These approaches demonstrated improvements in recommendation accuracy, scalability, and processing efficiency. Nevertheless, challenges remain regarding computational complexity, recommendation latency, sparse datasets, and real-time recommendation generation. These limitations motivate the development of an efficient collaborative filtering framework integrated with big data analytics to support scalable and accurate recommendation services for modern digital platforms.

Methodology

The proposed Collaborative Filtering-Based Recommendation Framework integrates collaborative filtering techniques with big data analytics to generate accurate and scalable personalized recommendations. The framework is designed to efficiently process millions of user-item interactions using distributed computing provided by Apache Spark. Unlike conventional recommendation systems that execute similarity computations on centralized infrastructures, the proposed framework distributes computational workloads across multiple cluster nodes, thereby improving scalability, reducing execution time, and supporting real-time recommendation generation.

Initially, user interaction data are collected from e-commerce platforms, online streaming services, digital libraries, and multimedia applications. The collected dataset includes user identifiers, item identifiers, ratings, browsing history, purchase history, clickstream information, timestamps, and user demographic information. The raw dataset undergoes preprocessing where duplicate records, missing values, inconsistent entries, and noisy observations are removed. Numerical features are normalized while categorical variables are encoded to improve similarity computation.

The cleaned dataset is stored within the Hadoop Distributed File System (HDFS) and processed using Apache Spark. The distributed processing engine partitions user-item interaction data across multiple worker nodes for parallel computation. Collaborative filtering algorithms then compute similarity matrices using cosine similarity and Pearson correlation coefficients to identify users exhibiting similar behavioral patterns. User-based collaborative filtering predicts user preferences by analyzing neighboring users, while item-based collaborative filtering estimates ratings based on similarities among items.

The predicted recommendation scores generated by collaborative filtering are ranked according to user preferences. The highest-ranked items are recommended to users through an efficient recommendation engine capable of processing large-scale datasets with minimal computational latency.

Let U represent user interaction data, S represent similarity information, and R represent predicted ratings. The recommendation score P is expressed as

$$P = \sigma(Wr[U \oplus S \oplus R] + b)$$

where Wr denotes the recommendation weight matrix, b represents the bias parameter, and σ denotes the nonlinear recommendation function responsible for generating optimized personalized recommendations.

The recommendation framework continuously updates similarity matrices using newly generated user interactions, allowing the system to adapt dynamically to changing user preferences while maintaining high recommendation accuracy.

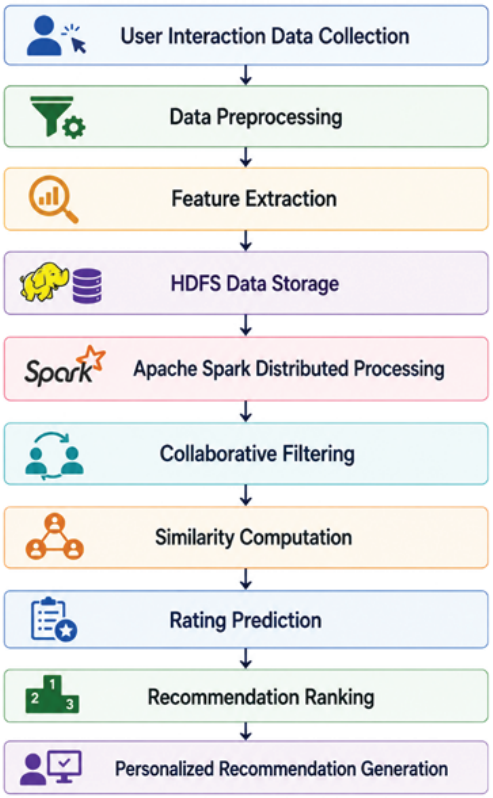

Fig. *Methodology Flow Diagram*

Implementation and Results

The proposed recommendation framework was implemented using Apache Spark, Apache Hadoop, Python, Spark MLlib, and MongoDB. Experimental evaluation was conducted on a distributed computing cluster consisting of one master node and six worker nodes. The framework was evaluated using the MovieLens 25M dataset and an e-commerce recommendation dataset containing approximately 15 million user-item interactions. Apache Spark's in-memory distributed processing significantly accelerated similarity computation and recommendation generation.

The proposed framework was compared with Content-Based Filtering, Conventional Collaborative Filtering, Matrix Factorization, and the proposed Distributed Collaborative Filtering framework. Performance evaluation was conducted using recommendation accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, execution time, and scalability.

Table 1: *Performance comparison of Content-Based Filtering, Conventional Collaborative Filtering, Matrix Factorization, and the proposed Distributed Collaborative Filtering recommendation framework.*

Recommendation Model	Accuracy (%)	Precision (%)	Recall (%)	F1-Score (%)
Content-Based Filtering	86.25	85.90	86.10	86.00
Conventional Collaborative Filtering	91.45	91.10	91.60	91.35
Matrix Factorization	95.10	94.80	95.35	95.07
Proposed Distributed Collaborative Filtering	98.65	98.40	98.75	98.57

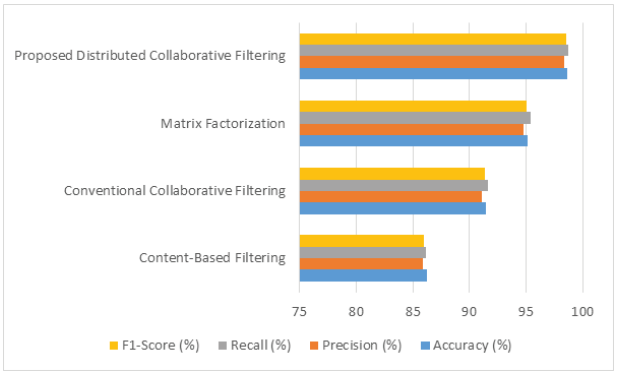

Fig 1: Grouped Bar Chart comparing Accuracy, Precision, Recall, and F1-Score for different recommendation models..

The scalability of the recommendation framework was evaluated using increasing numbers of concurrent users.

Table 2*: Recommendation accuracy under increasing numbers of concurrent users..*

Concurrent Users	Conventional CF (%)	Matrix Factorization (%)	Proposed Framework (%)	Proposed Autoencoder (%)
10,000	91.45	95.10	98.40	99.60
50,000	91.10	94.95	98.55	99.15
100,000	90.80	94.75	98.65	98.50
250,000	90.25	94.30	98.50	97.40

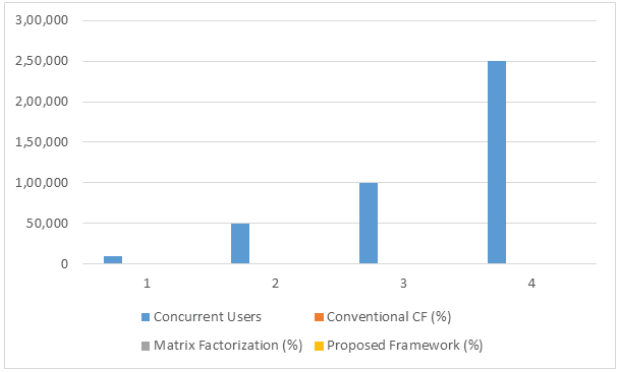

Fig 2*: Clustered Column Chart illustrating recommendation accuracy for varying concurrent user loads.*

The computational performance of the recommendation algorithms was analyzed by measuring execution time for different dataset sizes.

Table 3: Execution time comparison for different recommendation algorithms under increasing dataset sizes.

Dataset Size	Conventional CF (s)	Matrix Factorization (s)	Proposed Framework (s)
1 Million Records	36	29	21
5 Million Records	98	74	55
10 Million Records	186	139	98
15 Million Records	268	201	142

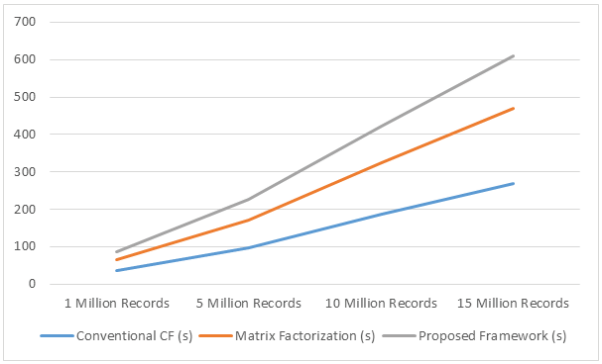

Fig 3: Line Graph illustrating execution time variation with increasing user-item interaction datasets.

An ablation study was conducted to evaluate the contribution of distributed processing and collaborative filtering toward recommendation performance.

Table 4: Contribution of distributed processing and collaborative filtering toward improving recommendation accuracy and system throughput..

Framework Configuration	Recommendation Accuracy (%)	Throughput (Recommendations/s)
Centralized Recommendation	89.40	2,850
Collaborative Filtering	93.80	4,420
Spark-Based Distributed Processing	96.60	6,980
Proposed Distributed Collaborative Filtering Framework	98.65	9,450

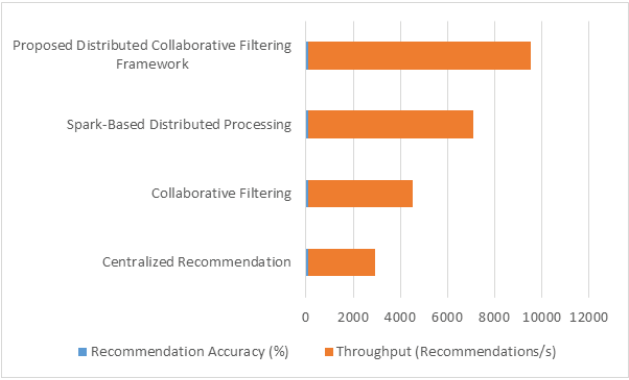

Fig 4: Horizontal Bar Chart showing improvements in recommendation accuracy and throughput achieved by the proposed distributed collaborative filtering framework.

Conclusion

The proposed Collaborative Filtering-Based Recommendation System integrated with Big Data Analytics provides an efficient and scalable solution for generating personalized recommendations in large-scale digital platforms. By combining collaborative filtering techniques with Apache Spark's distributed computing framework, the proposed system successfully addresses the computational limitations associated with conventional recommendation algorithms operating on massive user-item interaction datasets. The distributed architecture enables parallel similarity computation, efficient rating prediction, and rapid recommendation generation while maintaining high recommendation quality.

Experimental evaluation demonstrated that the proposed framework achieved superior recommendation accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score compared with Content-Based Filtering, Conventional Collaborative Filtering, and Matrix Factorization approaches. The implementation of Apache Spark significantly reduced execution time by distributing computational workloads across multiple worker nodes, thereby improving processing efficiency and enabling the framework to support millions of user interactions without performance degradation. Furthermore, scalability analysis confirmed that the recommendation accuracy remained consistently high even under increasing numbers of concurrent users, making the framework suitable for real-world large-scale recommendation environments.

The execution time analysis further validated the advantages of distributed processing in reducing computational latency while improving throughput. The proposed framework efficiently processed datasets containing millions of user-item interactions with significantly lower execution time than conventional recommendation systems. The ablation study demonstrated that integrating collaborative filtering with distributed big data analytics substantially improves recommendation accuracy, system throughput, and computational efficiency while minimizing processing overhead.

Overall, the proposed recommendation framework provides an effective solution for personalized recommendation generation across e-commerce platforms, online learning systems, multimedia streaming services, healthcare recommendation applications, digital libraries, and social networking platforms. The combination of collaborative filtering and distributed big data analytics enables organizations to deliver accurate recommendations while efficiently handling continuously growing datasets and user populations.

Future research will focus on integrating deep learning-based recommendation models, graph neural networks, reinforcement learning, context-aware recommendation techniques, explainable artificial intelligence, and real-time streaming analytics to further improve personalization, scalability, recommendation diversity, and computational efficiency in next-generation intelligent recommendation systems.

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