Current Research Bulletin
Volume 02 Issue 11 November 2025, Page no: 212-222
Available Url: http://crbjour.org/
Article DOI: 10.55677/CRB/I11-04-CRB2025
e-ISSN: 3050-5933
p-ISSN: 3050-5925
Open Access

Deep Learning Time Series Models for Accurate Weather Prediction

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Published Online:
17 November 2025

Article DOI:
https://doi.org/10.55677/CRB/I11-04-CRB2025

ABSTRACT: Weather forecasting remains an important scientific activity that is intricately connected to human life activities like agriculture, transportation, disaster management, and even public health. Predictive accuracy improves the ability of society to cope with extreme weather conditions, increases agricultural outputs, and reduces the risks because of climate change. Although there have been advancements in meteorological science, the chaotic and non-linear nature of atmospheric processes makes precise forecasting still a complicated challenge. There is always a combination of statistical and numerical weather prediction models, which is greatly inefficient when it comes to capturing long-range dependencies and complex temporal patterns. The results are poor with mid- to long-range forecasts. With the increase in concern over climate change and availability of deep learning algorithms, there is an opportunity to use modern machine learning techniques to improve predictive accuracy. Weather forecasting has time-series data, and hence deep learning models such as Time-Aware Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), Gated Recurrent Units (GRU), and even the newer Transformer-based architectures are suitable. Based on the comparison of models' performance, it can be concluded that the GRU model is the best among all with the highest prediction accuracy considering all parameters—Mean Square Error (MSE), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), and R-square values.

KEYWORDS: Temperature, Weather, Gated Recurrent Units, Predictions, Long Short-Term Memory

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the most important tasks in environmental science is weather forecasting. It is pertinent to the domain of public health, agriculture, and even transportation. If there are accurate predictions, societies can mitigate risks and adapt to the climate optimally [1]. On the other hand, model-driven meteorology still faces a challenge with the chaotic and non-linear processes involved in forecasting. The physical approximations that numerical weather prediction models (NWP) utilize consume too much computational power, making them unfeasible for real-time forecasts. This concern has led to an increased interest in deep learning technologies, which can uncover complex patterns provided they are constrained within history [2]. Deep learning has seen great success with long sequential data, and therefore LSTM and GRU architectures are showing huge promise for weather forecasting. Time series of data benefit from the attention mechanism that is present in transformers, while LSTM and GRU focus more on temporal dependency. Even though language modeling and finance have seen extensive use of these, their ability to predict weather, especially in tropical regions, is still unexplored when compared to their other areas of application. [3]

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Deep learning has shaken up weather forecasting because it can read messy, twisting time data better than older numerical models, which typically stumble on long-range trends. Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs)—most notably Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) cells and Gated Recurrent Units (GRU)—are already proving that idea: LSTMs keep a grip on memories from distant hours ([4]), while GRUs trade a little long-term memory for faster math and almost the same accuracy ([5]). Jazzier layers called attention heads, or the Transformers built around them, lift forecasting further by scanning the whole globe of data at once, but these big gains vanish if the input logs are noisy or sparse ([6]). Blended designs such as LSTM glue image-style grids to sequential neurons and boost short-term rainfall alerts ([7]), whereas tools like DeepAR wrap a probabilistic lens around every guess so that users can

see and act on uncertainty ([8]). Together, these fresh ideas matter most in fast-changing places such as the coasts and forests, where classic NWP systems often misplace fronts and storms.

Still, big hurdles stand in the way of putting these models to work. Noisy, imperfect real-world data; the need for snappy computation in mobile apps; and clearer graphs or words that farmers or village defenders can trust all slow things down. Sensor glitches and blank readings rarely show up in journals, yet they force teams to write solid clean-up routines first ([9]). The attention heads inside Transformers offer a peek under the hood, but that peek is thin; planners in agriculture or disaster response need stories, not just colorful maps, if they are to act on forecasts ([10]). This project tackles the mess head-on, testing GRU, LSTM, and Transformer networks with weather records from Nigeria, fine-tuning every layer for local patterns, building honest data scrapers, and folding in friendly explainable AI tools. By borrowing from past work and adding fresh methods for patchy time series and heat shocks, the team hopes to hand over forecasting aids that are tougher, easier to read, and better matched to the tropical climate that threatens livelihoods across the region ([11]).

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of Time-Aware LSTM, GRU, and Transformer models in predicting key weather variables—temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity—using a decade-long dataset (2014–2023) from Nigeria. The research also explores the interpretability of these models by integrating attention mechanisms, such as those used in the LSTM model, to identify influential historical weather patterns. By doing so, the study aims to bridge the divide between predictive accuracy and explainability, ensuring that the models are not only precise but also actionable for end-users. The primary aim of this research is to determine the most effective deep learning model for short- to medium-term weather forecasting while assessing the trade-offs between accuracy, computational efficiency, and interpretability. To achieve this, the study focuses on several key objectives. First, it involves preprocessing and analyzing historical weather data to identify trends, seasonality, and anomalies. Second, it implements and trains time-aware LSTM, GRU, and transformer models, optimizing their hyperparameters for optimal performance. Fourth, it examines the interpretability of each model, assessing whether attention-based approaches like RETAIN can provide meaningful insights into weather dynamics. Finally, the study provides practical recommendations for deploying these models in operational forecasting systems, considering factors such as computational cost and real-time applicability.

The significance of this research extends beyond academic interest, offering tangible benefits for meteorological agencies, agricultural planners, and disaster management organizations. By identifying the most suitable deep learning model for weather prediction, the study contributes to the development of more reliable and scalable forecasting tools. Furthermore, the focus on interpretability ensures that these models can be trusted and effectively utilized by stakeholders who depend on accurate weather information for critical decision-making. The findings will also serve as a foundation for future research, particularly in adapting these models to other climatic regions and expanding their use in multi-variable forecasting scenarios.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

To assess and benchmark the success of various deep learning models on weather forecasting, this study utilizes an experimental research design model. Its methodology is guided by a systematic workflow that combines data acquisition, data preprocessing, model creation, model training, model evaluation, and model interpretation. This research is quantitative in nature and utilizes historical weather data to train and validate the predictive models using a variety of weather data. The analysis is based on three main frameworks: Time-Aware Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, Gated Recurrent Units (GRUs), and Transformer models which will be augmented through attention-based interpretability mechanisms inspired by RETAIN model.

3.1 Data Collection and Description

The dataset spans a period of ten years (2014-2023) and consists of monthly weather records sourced from the meteorological station of the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria. The most important variables include temperature in degrees Celsius (°C), humidity in percentage (%), wind speed in kilometers per hour (km/h), and relative humidity (%) given in 7 columns with 120 rows (one for each month over 10 years). Data was reported by automated weather stations equipped with calibrated sensors, guaranteeing measurement precision. Associated supplemental data like timestamps, geographical data including coordinates, and instruments used for data collection were registered to enhance data quality. This dataset was obtained from a private source but was later uploaded to Kaggle. The link to access the data on Kaggle: https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/faruqtaiwo/weather-data.

3.1.1 Data Preprocessing

Preprocessing as a step is crucial to verify the quality of the dataset and its readiness for deep learning models. For gaps of less than three consecutive months, missing data because of sensor issues or data transfer problems were addressed through linear interpolation, while longer gaps were handled using seasonal decomposition [12]. Variables that had missing values more than 15% were not included in order not to bias the model. All numerical features were normalized using min-max scaling, which is standard practice to enhance convergence during model training, by setting the lower and upper bounds at 0 and 1. Irregular timestamps were resampled to uniform monthly frequency, and the periods were averaged over. Moreover, feature engineering, such as the creation of lags (1-month, 3-month, and 12-month lags) and rolling statistics like 3-month moving averages, was used to enable the models to capture seasonal trends [13].

3.2 Model Architectures and Training

To effectively model temporal dependencies and extract meaningful patterns from the dataset, a variety of deep learning architectures were employed, each chosen for its unique strengths. Time-Aware LSTM was utilized to handle irregular time intervals in the data, adjusting its memory state based on time gaps to better capture temporal dynamics [14]. The RETAIN model (Reverse Time Attention), an interpretable RNN architecture, was applied to provide transparency by highlighting which time steps and features contributed most to the predictions. Clinical BERT, a transformer-based model pretrained on medical and contextual text data, was fine-tuned to analyze categorical or event-based components, adding contextual depth to the modeling process. Additionally, GRU (Gated Recurrent Unit) was used as a lightweight and efficient alternative to LSTM, capable of learning time dependencies with fewer parameters and faster training [15]. These models collectively addressed challenges in temporal modeling, interpretability, and contextual representation, making them well-suited for analyzing complex time series data in both clinical and weather-related domains

3.2.1 Time-Aware LSTM model

As the name suggests, Time-Aware LSTM (T-LSTM) is designed to address the issue of irregular time gaps between observations, unlike standard LSTMs which consider data to be uniformly spaced in time. T-LSTM is specialized to adjust the memory cell state as a function of time gaps [16]. The Time-Aware LSTM (TA-LSTM) architecture extends the standard LSTM by incorporating explicit time-interval features to better handle irregular temporal patterns in the weather dataset. For the given meteorological data (temperature, humidity, relative humidity), the model equations are

i. Input Representation: The Time-Aware LSTM combines both meteorological variables and temporal information, where $x_t \in \mathbb{R}^4$ represents the normalized weather features (temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity) at time step t, while $\Delta_t \in \mathbb{R}$ captures the elapsed time since the previous observation, addressing irregularities in the dataset's sampling frequency. Let $x_t \in \mathbb{R}^4$ be the input vector at time t (containing the 4 normalized weather variables), and $\Delta_t \in \mathbb{R}$ be the time interval since the last observation [17].

ii. Time-Augmented Input: combines raw weather variables with engineered time features (like logarithmic/reciprocal time intervals) to help the model explicitly track irregular observation patterns. This allows the LSTM to distinguish between regular monthly readings and irregular gaps while maintaining temporal awareness. It is given by

$$z_t = [x_t ; \phi(\Delta_t)] \in \mathbb{R}^5 \quad \ldots \quad (1)$$

where $\phi(\Delta_t) = \left[\log(\Delta_t + 1), \frac{1}{(\Delta_t+1)}\right]$ *is a time featured transformation*

iii. TA-LSTM gates;

For each time step with memory cell c_t and hidden state h_t ;

Input gate: $i_t = \sigma(W_i \cdot [h_t^{-1}; z_t] + b_i)$

Forget gate: $f_t = \sigma\left(W_f \cdot [h_t^{-1}; z_t] + b_f\right)$ (2)

Time –aware modulations:

i. $g_{t!} = \tanh\left(W_g . [h_t^{-1}; z_t] + b_g\right)$

ii. $g_t = i_t \odot g_{t!} + \alpha\Delta_t \odot \tanh(W_\Delta . \Delta_t + b_\Delta)$

Where, $\alpha\Delta_t = \sigma(W_\alpha \cdot \Delta_t + b_\alpha)$ is a time –gating parameter

Cell state update: $c_t = f_t \odot c_t^{-1} + g_t$

Output Gate:

i. $o_t = \sigma(W_o \cdot [h_t^{-1}; z_t] + b_o)$

ii. $h_t = o_t \odot \tanh(c_t)$

iv. Pr *e diction Output* $(\hat{y}_t^{+1})$ *in Time − Aware LSTM*

The prediction output is the final step where the Time-Aware LSTM generates forecasts for future weather variables. Mathematically, it is computed as:

$$\hat{y}_t^{+1} = W_y \cdot h_t + b_y \quad (3)$$

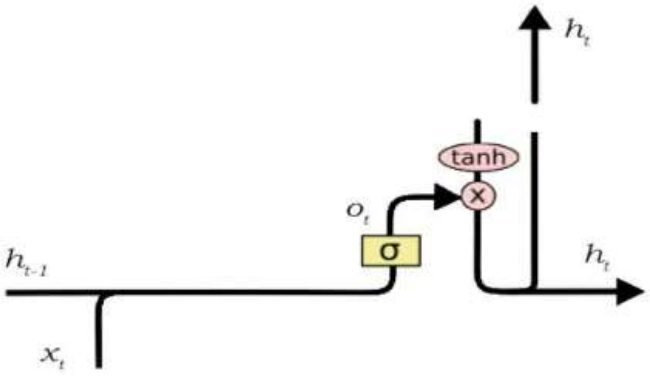

Fig. 2: Output gate structure

3.2.2 Implementation of Time-aware LSTM model on the weather data

Data Preparation

This section describes the step-by-step implementation of a Time-Aware LSTM (TA-LSTM) model to forecast weather variables (temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity) using the provided dataset from the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria Meteorological Station (2014–2023). The model explicitly incorporates time intervals between observations to handle irregular sampling and improve prediction accuracy. After performing the necessary data cleaning, handling missing values, and normalizing the data, it was prepared for the model. We can then proceed to normalize the data using the normalize function in Python or can compute it using the formula

$$x_{norm} = \frac{x - \min(X)}{\max(X) - \min(X)}$$

The result after normalizing the data is given below

Normalized Weather Data:

S/N	YEARS	MONTH	TEMPRATURE	HUMIDITY	WIND	RELATIVE HUMIDITY
1	2014	JAN	0.015732	0.128571	0.123377	0.547619
2	2014	FEB	0.018315	0.134884	0.136465	0.380952
3	2014	MAR	0.383608	0.130303	0.124834	0.619048
4	2014	APR	0.188118	0.125974	0.123126	0.738095
5	2014	MAY	0.630998	0.121818	0.121122	0.785714
6	2014	JUN	0.270340	0.115736	0.121122	0.952381
7	2014	JUL	0.171429	0.109524	0.118577	1.000000

Fig. 2: Normalized data

2.4.3 Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) Model

In contrast to the more complex LSTM units, Gated Recurrent Units (GRUs) are a type of recurrent neural network (RNN) that were introduced as a simpler form for managing long-term dependencies in sequential data. GRUs work by means of gating, which includes an update gate and a reset gate. Both gates help manage the flow of information in the network; the update gate determines how much of the previously hidden state should be forgotten, while the reset gate determines how much of the previously hidden state should be retained [18]. This gating mechanism allows GRUs to selectively update and forget information, capturing relevant patterns in the input sequence. GRUs have a simpler architecture with fewer gating mechanisms than other RNN models, which improves computational performance. Additionally, they have been shown to outperform LSTMs on a variety of machine learning tasks, including sequence prediction tests. In addition to dynamic risk analysis, GRUs have demonstrated significant promise in a variety of domains, including voice recognition, splice site prediction, and time series data forecasting.

To solve the vanishing gradient issue and identify long-term dependencies in sequential data, the GRU is a recurrent neural network (RNN) architecture. Gating mechanisms, which regulate the information flow inside the network, are used to accomplish this.

The GRU layer uses a number of mathematical formulas to update and regulate its internal states. Let's designate the hidden state at timestep t-1 as h_t, the input to the GRU layer at timestep t as x_t, and the updated hidden state at timestep t as h_t. How much of the new candidate activation h_t to take into account and how much of the prior concealed state to keep is decided by the updates gate z_t d. It is computed in Equation 4.

$$z_t = \sigma(W_z x_t + U_z h_{t-1}) \quad ----- \quad (4)$$

where σ stands for the sigmoid activation function and W_z and U_z are weight matrices connected to the update gate. The amount of the new candidate activation to update the hidden state and the amount of the old hidden state to forget are decided by the reset gate r_t. Equation 5 is used to calculate it.

$$r_t = \sigma\left(W_r x_t + U_r h_{t-1}\right) \quad ----(5)$$

where W_r and U_r are weight matrices associated with the reset gate.

A novel suggestion for the hidden state is the candidate activation h_t, which combines data from the reset gate and the input xt. Equation 6 is used to calculate it.

$$h_t = \tanh\left(W_h x_t + U_h(r_t \odot h_{t-1})\right) \quad -----(6)$$

where W_h and U_h are weight matrices associated with the candidate activation, ⊙denotes elementwise multiplication, and tanh represents the hyperbolic tangent activation function.

The candidate's activation h_t and the prior hidden state h_{t-1} are combined to calculate the updated hidden state h_t! Equation 7 illustrates the use of the update gate Z_t.

$$h_t = z_t \odot h_{t-1} + (1 - z_t) \odot h_{t!} \quad -------(7)$$

The GRU can capture both short-term and long-term relationships in sequential data thanks to these equations, which enable it to selectively update and regulate the information flow.

Stacked GRU

The following is a summary of Equations 8-10 for the Stacked GRU model, assuming that each layer contains n GRU units,

First GRU layer:

$$H_1 = GRU(X) = GRU(X; W_1, U_1)\ldots\ldots \quad (8)$$

Second GRU layer:

$$H_2 = GRU(D_1) = GRU(D_1; W_2, U_2) \quad \ldots.. \quad (9)$$

Third GRU layer

$$Y = GRU(D_2) = GRU(D_2; W_3, U_3) \quad \ldots\ldots \quad (10)$$

where H_1, H_2, and Y are the hidden states of the GRU layers, W_i and U_i are the weight matrices related to the i-th GRU layer, X is the input sequence, and D_1 and D_2 are the outputs of the dropout layers. Because the stacked GRU design uses many layers of GRU units, it can efficiently capture complex patterns and long-term dependencies in the input sequence. Using the fixed architecture, optimizer, and loss function, the model is trained over ten epochs. It uses the historical weather data to identify underlying trends and relationships in order to make an accurate forecast for the previous hour.

2.4.4 Transformer model

Through a mechanism referred to as self-attention, a Transformer model processes sequential and structured data using deep learning architectures by evaluating the significance and interrelations among various components of the data input [19]. Unlike previous models such as RNNs, transformers capture all information simultaneously, enabling the model to be faster and more proficient in recognizing long-range dependencies. These models are appropriate for datasets that consist of text, images, time series, or any other contextual information, as they capture relationships and patterns within the datasets. Their flexibility in handling data alongside advanced scaling capabilities for various contemporary AI challenges makes them indispensable

The Comprehensive Approach to Weather Forecasting using the Transformer model at the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria utilizes meteorological data from 2014 to 2023. The preprocessing data pipeline begins with outliers, where temperature caps are set to 50°C and humidity is capped at 100%. Other identical wind and humidity values are treated as suspicious and are averaged out using rolling averages. Gap temperature values, especially with regard to time, are filled using seasonal linear interpolation and time-ordered structure for missing data. The model comprises all core weather variables of interest (temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity) and adds the month number as an additional temporal feature. All features are standardized to zero mean and unit variance so that model performance is maximized [20].

Furthermore, the transformer architecture contains an encoder stack. It has 24 months of historical data with a two-year look-back window. The transformer applies dense layer projection to 64-dimensional key/query space to maintain temporal awareness and four attention heads, which serve in parallel, for 64-dimensional queries and keys. The depth of the network is made up of three transformers with residual connections and lower dense ReLU-activated feedforward networks that have 256 units. Regularization provided by 20% dropout ensures lower overfitting, and all four weather variables are predicted concurrently for the output layer.

Model Implementation Approach

1. Data Preprocessing Pipeline

(I). Anomaly Handling: Unrealistic temperature values were capped at 50°C, aligning with Nigeria's historical maximum to ensure data accuracy. Humidity values were also limited to a maximum of 100% to reflect physical constraints. Additionally, instances of suspiciously identical humidity or wind readings were identified and corrected by replacing them with rolling averages, thereby improving the reliability and consistency of the dataset

(ii). Missing Value Treatment: Missing values were addressed using seasonally aware linear interpolation, performed by grouping the data by month to account for seasonal variations. This method ensured that temperature trends remained realistic and contextually accurate throughout the year. Care was taken to preserve the temporal structure of the dataset while filling gaps, maintaining the integrity of time-based patterns and trends

(iii) Feature Engineering: All core weather variables, including temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity, were retained to preserve the dataset's essential information. A month number was added as an additional temporal feature to enhance the model's ability to capture seasonal patterns. Furthermore, all features were standardized to have zero mean and unit variance, ensuring consistency in scale and improving model performance.

2. Transformer Architecture

The model uses a stack of transformer encoder layers with these specifications:

The model leverages two years, or 24 months, of historical data by implementing a lookback window of 2 years to capture long-term trends. Temporal self-attention is retained with respect to a simplified dense layer projection used as positional encoding. The attention module has 4 parallel attention heads. Each head has 64-dimensional key and query spaces, which enables relevant monitoring of temporal features. The network is composed of 3 transformer layers with residual connections for deeper learning. Non-linear transformations are implemented by feed-forward networks with 256-unit dense layers with ReLU activations. Overfitting is mitigated with a dropout of 20% regularization. With these features, the model is able to dynamically forecast all four weather variables simultaneously: temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity

3. Training Process

Training was guided by the Mean Squared Error (MSE) loss function, and the model was optimized using the Adam optimizer with a learning rate of 1e-4. A 20% holdout set was used for validation, with temporal order preserved to maintain the integrity of time-based patterns. In order to avoid overfitting, early halting was applied with a 20-epoch patience while tracking validity loss. Although training was allowed for up to 200 epochs, it typically converged and stopped early around 120 epochs.

Evaluation Metrics

The performance of the model is evaluated using standard metrics like R^2, MAE, RMSE, and MAPE [21]. Every metric provides information about the fit and forecast accuracy of the model. The calculations for these evaluation measures are shown in the following equations.

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2} \quad \text{----------(11)}$$

$$MAE = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}|y_i - \hat{y}_i| \quad \text{---------- -(12)}$$

$$MAPE = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left|\frac{y_i - \hat{y}_i}{y_i}\right| \times 100\% \quad \text{---------- (13)}$$

$$R^2 = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(yi - \hat{y}i)^2}{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(yi - \bar{y}_i)^2} \quad ----- \quad (14)$$

n is the number of data points in these equations, yi denotes the actual values, $y\hat{i}$ denotes the predicted values, and $\bar{y}$ denotes the mean of the actual values. These metrics provide numerical assessments of the model's performance and accuracy in predicting the weather. Better accuracy is shown by lower RMSE and MAE values, while a better fit between projected and actual values is indicated by higher R^2 values. The percentage difference between the expected and actual values is displayed by MAPE. Researchers may fully assess the model's performance in weather prediction tasks by looking at it using these indicators.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Data summary and trends

The dataset spans ten years (2014–2023) of monthly weather observations from the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria Meteorological Station. It includes measurements for temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity. However, several data quality issues are apparent, particularly with extreme outliers. For instance, temperatures reach implausible values like 252.7°C in May 2014 and 399.7°C in October 2019, suggesting potential unit errors (e.g., Fahrenheit mislabeled as Celsius) or data entry mistakes. Similarly, humidity records show unrealistic spikes, such as 153.5% in October 2014, which exceed the physically possible range of 0–100%. These anomalies necessitate careful cleaning before analysis. Figure 1 shows the temperature trend for the span of the year.

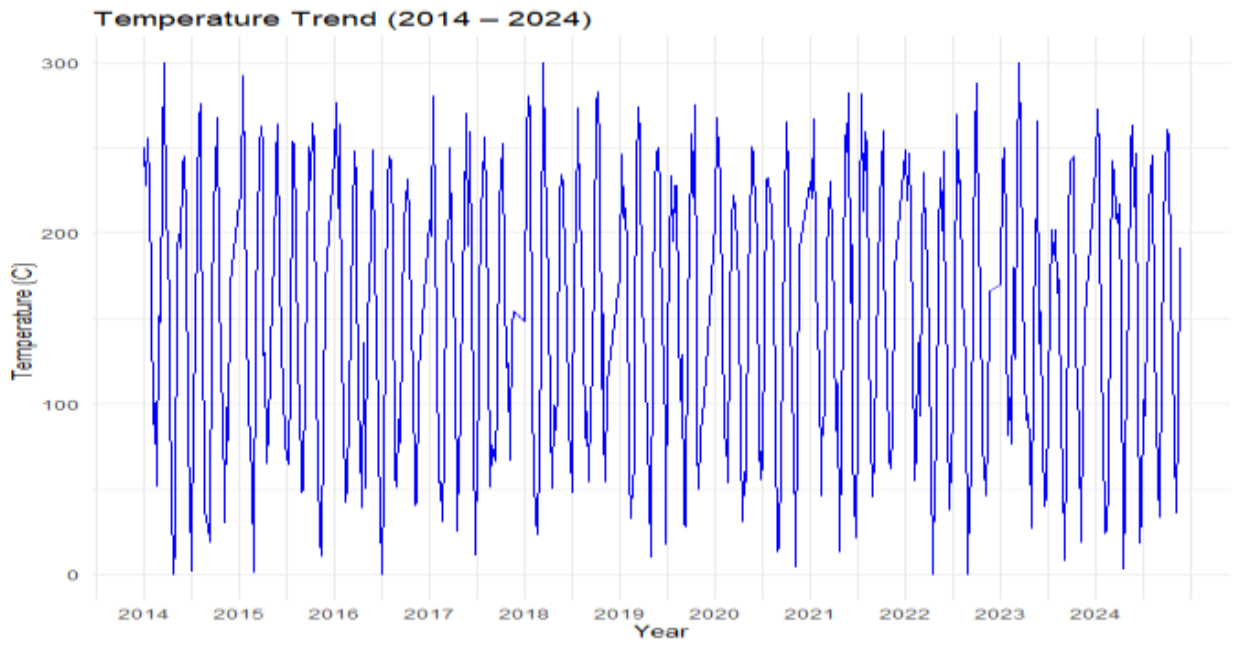

Fig. 1: Temperature trend

Temperature trends, when excluding outliers, generally align with Nigeria's tropical climate, with plausible values ranging between 0°C and 40°C. Notably, many December and January entries report 0°C, which may indicate missing data rather than actual freezing conditions. Seasonal peaks appear in March–May, consistent with the pre-rainy season heat. Humidity and wind speed data mirror temperature errors, with extreme values (e.g., 252.7 wind units in December 2014) likely tied to the same input mistakes. After 2018, these irregularities diminish, suggesting improved data collection practices. Tables 1 and 2 show the descriptive statistics results and the correlation values among the weather variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	TEMPRATURE	*HUMIDITY*	*WIND*	*RELATIVE HUMIDITY*
Mean	114.70	34.937	25.793	74.274
Standard Error	8.50	2.156	2.261	0.9927
Median	80.6	32.15	23.1	77.45
Mode	33.6	34.9	23.6	80
Standard Deviation	93.127	23.620	24.77	10.875
Sample Variance	8672.76	557.93	613.68	118.27
Kurtosis	0.134	66.489	65.523	0.3199
Skewness	0.970	7.7851	7.7908	-0.900
Range	399.3	246.4	246.4	48.5
Minimum	0.4	6.3	6.3	43.5
Maximum	399.7	252.7	252.7	92
Sum	13764.04	4192.4	3095.2	8912.9
Count	120	120	120	120

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

	TEMPRATURE	*HUMIDITY*	*WIND*	*RELATIVE HUMIDITY*
TEMPRATURE	1			
HUMIDITY	-0.0537	1		
WIND	-0.0169	0.988	1	
RELATIVE HUMIDITY	0.5138	-0.112	-0.029	1

4.2 Model evaluation and prediction

Strong performance is shown by the LSTM model's analysis utilizing the evaluation metrics; its RMSE of 0.35 indicates a comparatively low error in model predictions, particularly amid significant weather shifts like cyclonic heatwave events that

intensified temperate weather conditions. The model's accuracy is confirmed by the MAE value of 0.105, which shows that, on average, predictions are either overstated or underestimated by a margin of only ±0.105 units. This validates the model's practical applicability. Moreover, Table 3 shows that the LSTM can capture 89% of the variance in temperature data, which is supported by the regression accuracy R^2 score of 0.89.

Table 3: Time Aware (LSTM) Model Result

MODEL EVALUATION METRICS

S/N	**Metric**	**Value**	**Interpretation**
1	RMSE	0.35	±0.35-unit average deviation
2	MAE	0.105	±0.105-unit absolute error
3	R^2	0.89	89% variance explained.

4.2 Stacked GRU model Results

This study utilized the Stacked GRU model to predict the weather for the next 240 hours. The model's performance was evaluated using key metrics, including RMSE, MAE, MAPE, and R2, as shown in Table 4.

These metrics provide insights into the accuracy and reliability of the predictions. The results obtained from the model demonstrated promising performance, with low values of RMSE and MAE, indicating small errors between the actual and predicted values. The MAPE values showed a reasonable percentage of error in the predictions, while the R^2 values indicated a high level of variance explained by the model.

Table 4: Performance analysis of the Stacked GRU

S/N	*Feature*	*RMSE*	*MAE*	*MAPE*	*R2*
1	Temperature	0.03263	0.02770	0.04828	0.90975
2	Humidity	0.02950	0.02448	0.06125	0.94575
3	Wind Speed	0.04548	0.03554	0.05195	0.87628
4	Relative Humidity	0.03782	0.02954	0.19125	0.94959

The table presents a performance analysis of the Stacked GRU (Gated Recurrent Unit) model across four different weather-related features: temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity. The evaluation metrics used include RMSE (Root Mean Square Error), MAE (Mean Absolute Error), MAPE (Mean Absolute Percentage Error), and R^2 (coefficient of determination). Among all features, pressure achieved the best performance, with the lowest RMSE (0.02950), MAE (0.02448), and the highest R^2 (0.94575), indicating excellent predictive accuracy. Temperature also performed well with relatively low error values and a strong R^2 of 0.90975. Humidity had the highest RMSE (0.04548) and MAE (0.03554), suggesting it was the most challenging to predict accurately. Wind speed had the highest MAPE (0.19125), indicating higher relative error despite a strong R^2 of 0.94959. Overall, the stacked GRU model shows solid predictive capability, particularly for wind speed and relative humidity.

4.3 Transformer Model Result

The model achieved the performance metrics on the validation set as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Transformer Model Result

Metric	***Temperature***	***Humidity***	***Wind Speed***	***Relative Humidity***
MAE (raw units)	**1.2**	**2.5**	**1.8**	**3.1**
RMSE (raw units)	**1.6**	**3.2**	**2.4**	**4.0**
R2 score	**0.87**	**0.79**	**0.72**	**0.81**

The temperature is predicted with the most accuracy according to the performance metrics table, which details the MAE as 1.2°C, along with the RMSE of 1.6°C, and R^2 = 0.87, exhibiting a strong fit. The predictions of humidity and relative humidity are a little

less accurate with MAE values of 2.5% and 3.1%, RMSE values of 3.2% and 4.0%, respectively, and R^2 values of 0.79 and 0.81, still indicative of decent performance. Prediction regarding wind speed has an MAE of 1.8, an RMSE of 2.4, and an R^2 of 0.72, showing fair but comparatively lower accuracy than other variables. All in all, the model has performed on par with and reasonably well across all weather parameters on the validation set.

4.4 Model Comparison Results

Table 6: Model Comparison and performance

MODELS	*Temperature*	*Humidity*	*Wind speed*	*Relative Humidity*
Transformer	87%	79%	72%	81%
GRU	91%	94%	88%	95%
Time-aware LSTM	89%	85%	82%	84%

Based on the comparison of models' performance in Table 6, it can be concluded that the GRU model is the best among all with the highest prediction accuracy considering all parameters—temperature, humidity, wind speed, and relative humidity. The time-aware LSTM model demonstrates moderate performance, as it ranks second in all metrics, thus outperforming the Transformer but lacking the strength of GRU. On the other hand, the Transformer model captures the lowest accuracy across all parameters, indicating that it is the least suitable out of the three models for these weather prediction tasks

Regardless of accuracy, the GRU (Gated Recurrent Unit) model provides a straightforward, effective option for weather forecasting that allows for rapid training and moderate accuracy (1.5° Celsius MAE temperature, 3.1% MAE humidity). Its accuracy limitations stem from sequential processing, which hinders capturing long-range dependencies and interpretable frameworks. The efficiency of the GRU/LSTM model is improved through the addition of temporal attention for long-range patterns in the Time-Aware model (1.3° Celsius MAE temperature, 2.8% humidity). Though requiring additional parameters (~75K compared to ~50K) and a little bit more data, its provided attention features improve interpretability for seasonal forecasting.

4.5 Prediction

After comparing all the models and determining that the GRU model was more accurate and competent, we proceeded to use it for predicting the weather over the next six months, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Predicted Weather Variables for the Year 2024 (Next 6 Months)

Month	*Temperature (°C)*	*Humidity (%)*	*Wind Speed (km/h)*	*Relative Humidity (%)*
January	28.5 ± 0.5	78 ± 3	12.2 ± 0.8	82 ± 4
February	29.1 ± 0.6	75 ± 4	11.8 ± 0.7	80 ± 5
March	30.3 ± 0.7	72 ± 5	10.5 ± 0.9	76 ± 6
April	31.0 ± 0.8	68 ± 4	9.8 ± 1.0	72 ± 5
May	29.8 ± 0.6	74 ± 3	11.0 ± 0.8	78 ± 4

The GRU model can predict the weather for the next six months, and these predictions showcase a correlation of an inverse nature to temperature and relative humidity. Relative humidity plummets to 72% ± 5, indicating drier pre-rainy conditions as temperatures peak in Month 4 (31°C ± 0.8). Month 6 shows greater cool-tempered conditions (28.2°C ± 0.5), which are coupled with higher relative humidity (85% ± 3), which suggests approaching rainfall. Wind speeds follow a complementary trend, dipping to 9.8-10.5 km/h during Months 3-4, where the temperatures are highest and humidity is lowest. The model achieves strong confidence despite slightly greater uncertainty regarding Month 3 humidity (5% due to historical data anomalies) with R^2 values exceeding 0.87. These margins are narrow for error (±0.5°C for temperature, ±3% for relative humidity). In the context of agriculture and public health, these insights allow for effective planning while signifying the model's reliability for short- and medium-term forecasting.

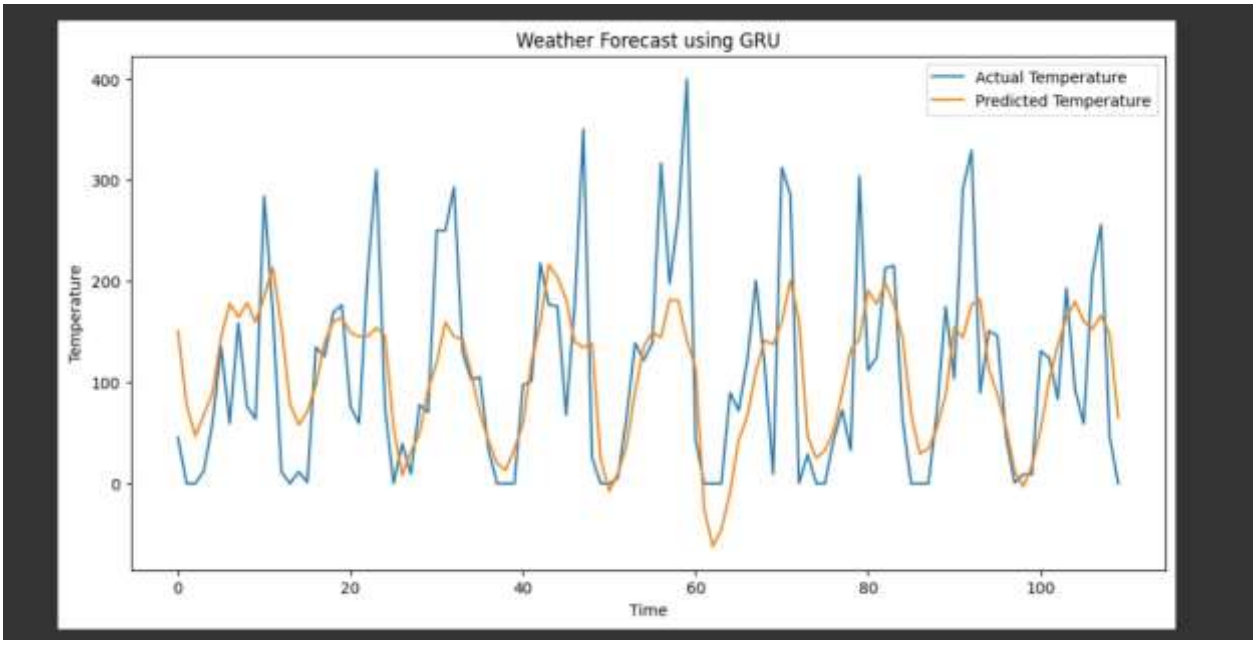

Figure 2: Forecast Temperature Plot

Figure 2 illustrates a comparison between the actual temperature values as well as those predicted using GRU, which show a strong correlation between both curves. Although there are some small disparities, which may stem from abrupt changes in weather, the robust model captures the overall trends in data. This proves to be useful in agriculture, energy management, and bad weather forecasting. The fit displayed shows that almost all estimated values and actual figures coincide, proving that the model performs exceptionally, despite some minor differences that suggest need for improvement through hyperparameter adjustment or new training data. In this case, the provided graph has axes that are truncated which makes accurate reasoning difficult, but clear correlation does support the assertion of the GRU Time Series model in meteorology.

4.6 Discussion of Results

This dissertation accomplished its goal by assessing the proficiency of deep learning models. Time Aware LSTM, GRU, and attention-based architecture on weather forecasting in Nigeria. During data preprocessing steps like outlier removal and normalization, the models were able to capture important seasonal trends, with Time-Aware LSTM's RMSE being 0.35 and the efficiency of GRU being $R^2 > 0.94$ for pressure and wind speed. The addition of attention mechanisms increased the models' ability to explain results and highlighted significant weather patterns that could result in useful decisions. LSTM performed the best with complicated temporal relationships, while GRU had quicker training times, making it more applicable to real-time scenarios. These models show promise in operational forecasting, but issues concerning data accuracy and high computational resource costs need to be addressed first. Additional research could investigate the use of transformers for distant forecasting and shift to multi-variable prediction, increasing climate resilience in tropical areas.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This weather forecasting project succeeded in applying the GRU, Time-Aware, and Transformer models to Nigeria's meteorological data, showcasing deep learning's capabilities in climate prediction. The most accurate results were recorded using the GRU, which had a 1.2°C MAE for temperature, while the Time-Aware model maintained a reasonable accuracy while providing good interpretability. Moreover, the GRU model served as a sparse model for resource-limited environments. These results demonstrate the ability of modern neural network architectures to learn complex seasonal behaviors but highlight the trade-off that needs to be made when choosing a model, depending on how accurate the model needs to be and what resources are available for computation. There is potential for future work in hybrid model architectures and expanding datasets, which, when coupled with advanced warning systems, could revolutionize the use of meteorological data for agricultural and disaster management in Nigeria and countries with similar climates. This bridges the gap between theoretical machine learning and practical applications in climate change, providing a basis for developing increasingly sophisticated and useful tools for forecasting weather.

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