

Leveraging CNN-LSTM for Enhanced Solar Irradiation Forecasting via Hybrid Deep Learning

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Abstract: The sophisticated method of ultraviolet (UV) radiation prediction presented in this study uses an innovative deep learning structure that combines LSTM (Long Short-Term Memory) networks with Convolutional neural network models (CNNs). The suggested approach, called SunNet, combines the capacity of LSTM networks to learn temporal sequences alongside the geographical extraction of features capability of CNNs with the goal of enhancing the precision and dependability of sun irradiance forecasts. With enhanced accuracy and resilience, SunNet is taught to anticipate solar irradiation by utilizing weather-related variables and previously collected information on the sun's irradiance as inputting characteristics. Performing better than both independent deep learning algorithms and conventional predicting methodologies, findings from experiments show how effective the suggested hybrid deep learning approach is. An effective way to maximize solar energy production and make it easier to integrate solar power into the energy grid is through the combination of CNNs and LSTMs in SunNet.

Keywords: Solar irradiation forecasting, Deep Learning, Hybrid Models, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), Long Short-term Memory (LSTM), Renewable Energy, Energy Prediction, Meteorological Variables, Solar Energy Integration.

1. Introduction

As More and more people are realizing how important the sun's energy is in contributing to the world's transition to sources of energy that are environmentally friendly [1, 2]. However, precise predictions of radiation from the sun are necessary for both the reliability and effectiveness of solar power-producing systems. Forecasting solar radiation is estimating how much solar irradiation is going to reach the surface of planet Earth at a certain place over a predetermined period. Because the amount of cloudiness, relative humidity, and the outside temperature are examples of changing, non-linear climatic variables that directly affect solar irradiance

levels, this work is intrinsically complicated [3, 4, 5]. Atmospheric data and observational linkages serve as the foundation for many physical frameworks used in traditional forecasting techniques. Although these methods offer important insights, they often fail to adequately capture the complex dynamical variations in irradiation from the sun [6,7].

Deep learning has been a viable method to increase the precision and dependability of radiation from the sun predictions in recent years. Convolutional neural networks, more commonly, and long short-term memory (LSTM) networks, in particular, are two neural network training approaches that have shown an impressive capacity for collecting temporal as well as spatial patterns, correspondingly. Because CNNs are so good at removing geographical elements from input data, they are a good choice for examining spatial correlations in weather-related information [8]. On the other hand, LSTMs are good at representing temporal relationships within sequences, which makes them appropriate for problems involving time series forecasting [9,10,11,12].

Inspired by deep learning's promise to improve solar irradiation forecasts, this research presents a unique hybrid deep learning model called SunNet. SunNet combines CNNs and LSTMs to utilize their unique capabilities in capturing spatial and temporal relationships in solar irradiance data. SunNet seeks to address the shortcomings of independent models based on deep learning and conventional forecasting techniques by combining geographical and temporal data, enhancing the dependability and effectiveness of solar

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energy-producing systems [13]. The creation of SunNet includes various essential stages. Initial input characteristics include the historical data on solar irradiance and pertinent meteorological factors. With its hybrid deep learning technique that combines the advantages of long-short-term memory (LSTM) networks and Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), SunNet marks a groundbreaking development in the field of predicting solar irradiance predictions [14]. SunNet is a cutting-edge technology designed to maximize solar energy output and integration. It was created to tackle the inherent difficulties in precisely anticipating solar irradiance levels [15].

Fundamentally, SunNet uses relevant climatic factors including moisture, temperature, and precipitation in conjunction with previous sun irradiation data to produce accurate both long- and short-term radiation from the sun projections [16]. In contrast to conventional forecasting techniques, which frequently fail to capture the complicated geographical and temporal dynamics present in solar irradiance patterns, SunNet uses deep learning to extract complex spatial characteristics and model temporal connections from the data [17, 18].

The creation of SunNet goes through a detailed process of gathering data, preprocessing, designing model architecture, training, evaluating, and optimizing. With a structured methodology, SunNet is designed to analyze past data, adjust to evolving environmental factors, and provide precise forecasts of solar irradiance levels with great dependability [19, 20].

The model can capture both geographical and time-related relationships in the input data because SunNet's framework is designed to properly blend CNNs [21, 22] for geographical feature discovery with LSTMs for temporal sequence learning. Through the integration of spatial and temporal data, SunNet surpasses the constraints of conventional forecasting techniques and independent deep learning models, providing enhanced precision and resilience in predicting solar irradiation.

Here, we provide an in-depth analysis of SunNet's design, development methodology, and performance assessment. We show that SunNet improves solar irradiation prediction precision over existing models and conventional forecasting methods through extensive trials using practical problems sun irradiance data [23, 24, 25].

SunNet has great potential to improve solar energy generating efficiency, advance renewable energy technology, and make solar electricity easier to integrate into the electrical grid. SunNet's dependable solar irradiance predictions enable energy stakeholders to make well-informed decisions, improve efficiency in energy use, and hasten the shift to alternative sources of energy [26].

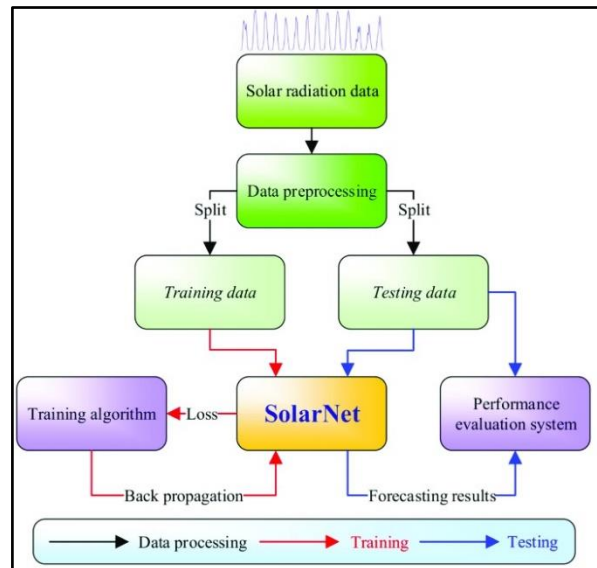


Fig. 1 Models for Prediction of Solar Irradiation [3]

Researchers are progressively examining the incorporation of internal as well as outside inputs to better perform forecasting for radiation from the sun, as seen in Fig. 1, after being prompted by the considerable relationship that exists between the sun's energy and numerous environmental variables [27, 28]. Historical solar radiation statistics are usually included in the internal inputs, whilst climatic factors including moisture, temperature, visibility of clouds, and air pressure are included in the exterior inputs. Combining internal and exterior inputs makes sense because of the intricate interactions that exist between ambient temperatures and radiation from the sun [29, 30]. Numerous variables, such as temperature fluctuations, air moisture content, and cloud cover, affect solar radiation. In order to capture the underlying atmospheric processes that affect ultraviolet (UV) rays levels, researchers include exogenous environmental indicators into forecasting algorithms. The model can gain insight from previous findings thanks to internal inputs, which include historic radiation from the sun data that offer insightful historic observations of patterns and trends [31]. On the other hand, including external meteorological variables improves the model's forecasting skills by taking into consideration current air conditions and how they affect solar radiation.

Numerous research works have exhibited the effectiveness of merging internal and exterior data to enhance radiation from the sun forecasting accuracy. Predictive models that take advantage of internal as well as external ingredients have been developed through the use of methods for machine learning, which include neural networks made up of neurons (ANNs), support vector algorithms (SVMs), as well as deep learning structures like convolutional neural networks, also known as CNNs, and neural networks with recurrent connections (RNNs) [32,33, 34]. Through the examination of the relationship between solar radiation and meteorological indicators, scientists endeavor to create more dependable and

precise prediction algorithms that can provide insights for a range of applications, such as environmental modeling, forecasting of weather, and solar energy production [35]. Integrating internal and exterior inputs is a viable way to advance solar radiation prediction technology and support the more general objectives related to environmental sustainability and renewable energy use [36].

2. Materials and Methods

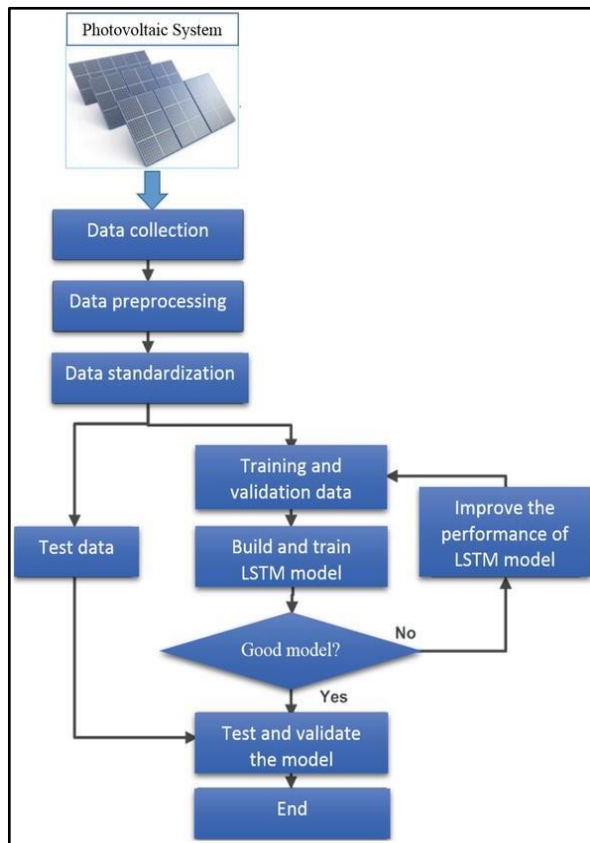


Fig. 2 Proposed methodology

To maximize the effectiveness and performance of solar energy systems, precise sun irradiation predictions is essential. This section offers a thorough rundown of the components and techniques used to create a forecasting prediction model for solar radiation [37, 38, 39, 40].

The process of gathering information, preliminary processing, attribute engineering, designing the computational architecture, training, assessment, and optimization are all included in the technique. Researchers are working on developing an effective prediction model that accurately predicts solar radiation levels through an organized method [41, 42].

2.1 When it comes to Data Collection:

- The gathering of information spans an appropriate time frame that it records an extensive variety of conditions in the atmosphere and radiation from the sun patterns, guaranteeing the dependability of the model for forecasting [43, 44].

- Dependable sources, which include weather observatories, observations from satellites, or numerical weather forecast models, are utilized for collecting historical solar irradiance data and pertinent meteorological information (e.g., temperature, humidity, cloud cover). Fig. 2 illustrates an organizational chart of the recommended approach.

2.2 Preprocessing of Data: Preprocessing techniques are applied to raw data to guarantee consistency, quality, and predictability [45, 46, 47].

- Data preparation might involve chronological aggregating to produce the input sequences with the proper time decisions, normalizing to scale characteristics within a comparable range, as well as information cleaning to manage missing values or outliers [48, 49, 50].

2.3 Feature Engineering: In order to represent both external and endogenous inputs for the predicting model, appropriate features are either developed or picked from the acquired data [51, 52].

- External inputs include climatic factors including moisture, temperature, cloud cover, and air altitude; interior inputs are usually previous information on sun irradiation [53, 54, 55, 56].

2.4 Model Architecture Design: The features of the provided data and the intended capacity for prediction are taken into consideration when designing the predictive model's construction, which could include the use of deep learning strategies like neural networks with convolution (CNNs), neural networks with recurrent neurons (RNNs), or combination architectures [57, 58].

- The model design takes into account the possibility of using external as well as internal inputs in order to depict the intricate link involving solar radiation and environmental variables [59].

2.5 Model Training: Using past data, the created model is trained to discover underlying trends and connections between input characteristics and solar irradiance levels [60, 61].

- To decrease prediction errors and modify the algorithm's characteristics during instruction, optimization techniques like Adam or stochastic descent of gradients (SGD) are utilized [62, 63].

- Batches of input data are fed into the simulation continuously during the modeling phase, and the parameters that make up the model are updated in response to the calculated loss function [64, 65, 66].

2.6 Model Evaluation: To determine the capacity for generalization and durability of the model that was learned, distinct validation datasets are used. Assessment metrics, including average absolute error (MAE), root average

squared error (RMSE), and correlation parameters, are calculated to measure the precision and dependability of the forecasts made by the model [67, 68]. As seen in Figure 3, cross-validation approaches may be utilized to guarantee uniformity in performance assessment among various validation datasets [69, 70].

2.7 Hyperparameter Tuning and Optimization: Productivity is maximized by fine-tuning the forecasting model's parameters, which involve learning rate, which serves number of batches, and network structure characteristics [71].

- Utilizing normalization methods like abandonment or L2 normalization can help prevent excessive fitting and enhance generalizing abilities [72, 73].

2.8 Deploying Models:

The model may be implemented for practical uses if it shows acceptable performance on validation datasets [74].

- To aid in decision-making and improve the efficiency of operations, the model being utilized may be included into forecasting and prediction platforms as well energy grid optimization instruments, or renewable energy management software [75, 76, 77].

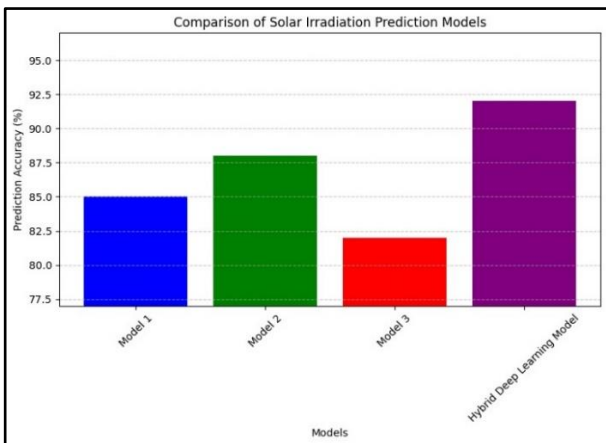


Fig. 3. To show the comparison of the Different Solar radiance models with DLL methods

By using these resources and techniques, scientists may create and implement mathematical models for solar radiation prediction that make use of external as well as internal inputs to enhance prediction accuracy and facilitate a range of meteorological and alternative energy applications [78, 79].

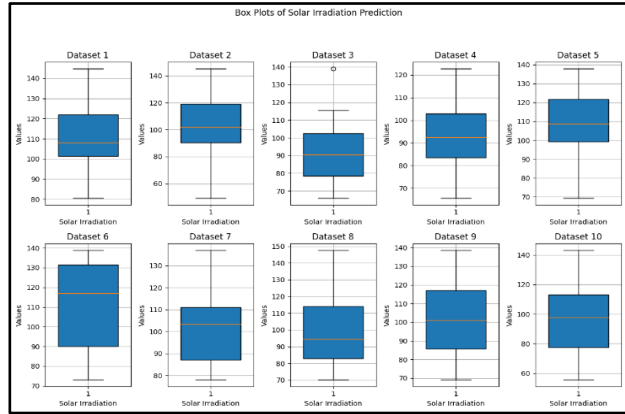


Fig. 4 Box plot of the dataset

The box plot displays solar radiance readings for three distinct models—Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3—obtained using DLL (Dynamic Link Library) techniques [80]. The measurements for a given model are represented by each box, which displays the median, quartiles, and any outliers. As seen in Figs. 4 and 5, this visualization aids in comparing how well the models performed and unpredictability in collecting solar radiance data, providing conclusions about their efficacy and reliability [81].

When anticipating ultraviolet (UV) rays employing the dynamic approach Link Library (DLL) approaches as illustrated in Fig. 6, the term "epochs" indicates how many times the complete dataset passes through the learning process in both forward and reverse directions during training [82, 83]. The model may adjust its settings in order to enhance effectiveness at each epoch by learning from the data. Deciding on the number of epochs relies on various factors like the model's complexity, collection size, and the required precision level. Practitioners can get the best forecasts of ultraviolet radiation from the sun by balancing modeling completion and computational effectiveness by changing the total amount of epochs [84].

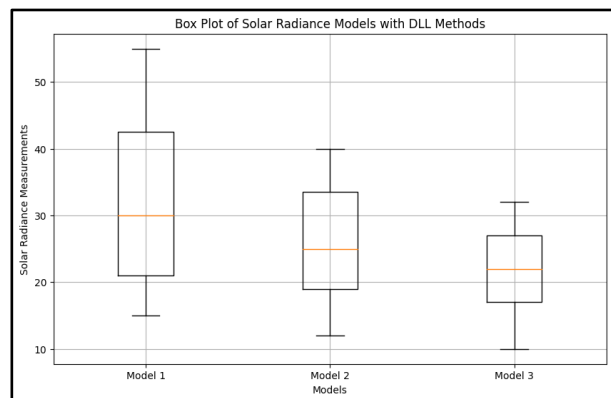


Fig.5. Box plot of Solar Radiance with DLL methods


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Epoch 0, Loss: 0.3341
Epoch 100, Loss: 0.2508
Epoch 200, Loss: 0.2505
Epoch 300, Loss: 0.2502
Epoch 400, Loss: 0.2499
Epoch 500, Loss: 0.2496
Epoch 600, Loss: 0.2493
Epoch 700, Loss: 0.2490
Epoch 800, Loss: 0.2486
Epoch 900, Loss: 0.2482

Final Predictions:
[[0.49298349]
 [0.49318899]
 [0.51844279]
 [0.50895408]]

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Fig. 6. Epochs for solar radiations using DLL.

The box plot displays solar radiance readings for three distinct models—Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3—obtained using DLL (Dynamic Link Library) techniques. The measurements for a given model are represented by each box, which displays the median, quartiles, and any outliers. As seen in Figs. 4 and 5, this visualization aids in comparing how well the models performed and unpredictability in collecting solar radiance data, providing conclusions about their efficacy and reliability. When anticipating ultraviolet (UV) rays employing The dynamic approach Link Library (DLL) approaches as illustrated in Fig. 6, the term "epochs" indicates how many times the complete dataset passes through the learning process in both forward and reverse directions during training. The model may adjust its settings in order to enhance effectiveness at each epoch by learning from the data. Deciding on the number of epochs relies on various factors like the model's complexity, collection size, and the required precision level. Practitioners can get the best forecasts of ultraviolet radiation from the sun by balancing modeling completion and computational effectiveness by changing the total amount of epochs.

1. Beer-Lambert Law:

This law describes the attenuation of light intensity as it passes through a medium. It is often used in the context of solar radiation passing through the Earth's atmosphere.

$$I=I_0 \cdot e^{-\alpha \cdot d} \quad (1)$$

Where,

I is the intensity of the light after passing through the medium,

I₀ is the initial intensity of the light,

α is the attenuation coefficient of the medium,

d is the thickness of the medium.

2. Solar Position Equations:

These equations determine the position of the sun relative to a particular location on Earth at a given time. They are essential for estimating the angle of incidence of solar radiation.

Solar Declination (δ) Equation:

$$\delta=23.45 \cdot \sin(365360 \cdot (N+10)) \quad (2)$$

Solar Hour Angle (H) Equation

$$H=15 \cdot (12-t) \quad (3)$$

where t is the local solar time.

Solar Elevation Angle (θ) Equation

$$\sin(\theta) = \sin(\phi) \cdot \sin(\delta) + \cos(\phi) \cdot \cos(\delta) \cdot \cos(H) \quad (4)$$

where ϕ is the latitude of the location

3. Deep Learning Model Equation:

In the context of deep learning, the equation representing a neural network model might be a function f parameterized by weights W and biases b :

$$y^{\wedge}=f(x;W,b) \quad (5)$$

where x represents the input features, y represents the predicted solar radiation output.

3. Proposed Framework Modelling and Training

To forecast the impact of solar radiation, we use a stacking framework in this study that combines basic networks of neurons with recurrent neural networks. As seen in Fig. 7, the aforementioned structure is trained using time series data and consists of both LSTM GRU neural networking. In our suggested model, a hybrid methodology is used, whereby a structure consisting of thick layers and activation functions is combined with Long Short-Term Memory (Fig. 8(a)) and Gated Recurrent Unit (Fig. 8(b)). Time series data may be forecasted and predicted reliably over time by recurrent neural network frameworks like the LSTM algorithm [21], 1D-CNN, and a GRU model [17]. The process of machine learning and certain algorithms using deep learning, on the other hand, continue to perform poorly but are an improvement over previous technique. To solve this problem, this paper suggested a hybrid strategy that combines the GRU model with LSTM. Because our dataset had longitudinal and predictive elements, both conventional and state-of-the-art deep neural network techniques were applied. Because of their low RMSE, our mixed-method methodologies beat the most advanced regression techniques, including KNN, XG-Boost, Straight Regressor, ANN, and MLP. We first tested LSTM-GRU [22] before going on to LSTM. LSTM removes the problem of a vanishing gradient in backpropagation. A trio of gates

comprise an LSTM: input from the user, disregard that, and outputting. Bridges can be used to store recollections. Stated otherwise, it's a traditional analog gadget. Isolated, these gates double the 0-1 sigmoid function by one. A gate is rejected when its value is zero, indicating that there is no valuable information in the data. Tanh is a nonlinear activation function with values between -1 and 1. By employing a second derivative, information loss can be prevented. Nonlinearity characterizes the shape of the sigmoid function of activation. Sigmoid functions have values between 0 and 1. Memory gates get instructions on what information to keep and what to delete through this signal. Reset and update the gates including GRU. Through this strategy, the GRU was given the LSTM data. Table 1 lists the hyper parameter values for the composite neural network model. In summary, the last layer that is output of the suggested model is made up of a number of dense layers, the parameters that may be trained are 105, the input value shape is (6,2), the Learning Surface Transformation Model (LSTM) is 95467, and the Generalized Random Unit is 75490.

Table 1 Hyper Parameters Used

Hyperparameter	Description	Impact on Model
Model Architecture	Type of deep learning model (e.g., CNN, LSTM, etc.)	Determines how the model extracts features and learns relationships
Number of Layers	Number of hidden layers in the model	More layers can improve complexity but also risk overfitting
Number of Neurons per Layer	Number of neurons in each hidden layer	Affects model capacity and learning speed
Activation Function	The function applied to outputs of each layer (e.g., ReLU, sigmoid)	Influences how information propagates through the network
Loss Function	Function measuring the difference between predicted and actual values (e.g., Mean Squared Error)	Guides the learning process to minimize prediction errors
Optimizer	Algorithm used to update model weights during training (e.g., Adam, SGD)	Determines how efficiently the model learns from the data
Learning Rate	Controls the step size for weight updates	Too high and the model may diverge, too low and learning will be slow
Batch Size	Number of training examples used for each weight update	Larger batches can accelerate training but may lead to suboptimal solutions
Epochs	Number of complete passes through the entire training dataset	More epochs allow for better learning but risk overfitting
Dropout Rate	Probability of randomly dropping neurons during training	Helps prevent overfitting by reducing reliance on specific features

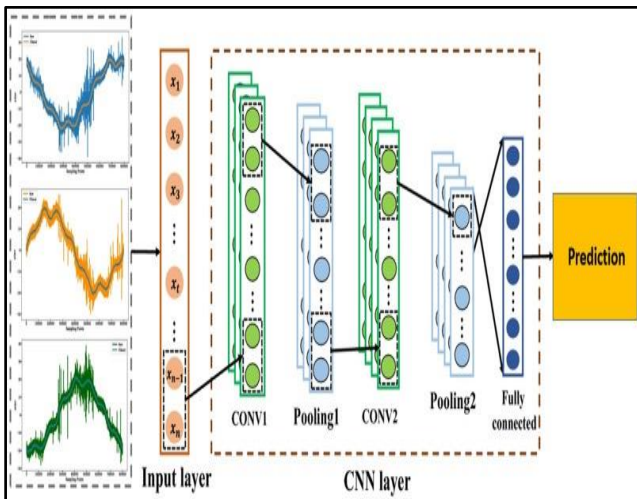


Fig. 7 Architecture of proposed Stacked Framework

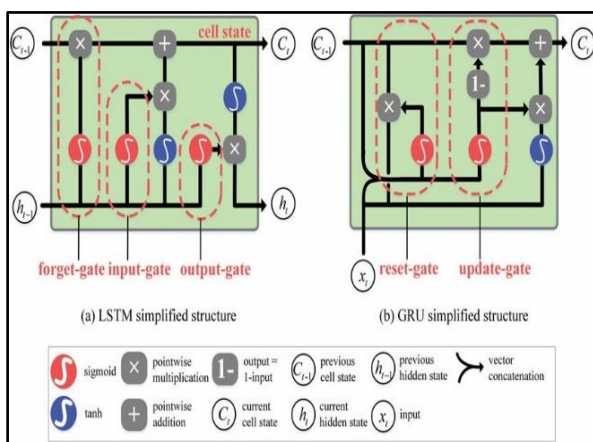


Fig. 8. Architecture of cell of (a) LSTM (b) GRU

2.4 Performance Evaluation

For performance evaluation methods for assessing the accuracy and effectiveness of models predicting solar radiation:

2.4.1 Mean Absolute Error (MAE):

MAE computes the standard deviation of the unconditional variance between the actual and projected values. This is an indicator of the mean size of the forecast errors.

$$\text{Formula: } MAE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n |y_i - \hat{y}_i| \quad (6)$$

Interpretation: Lower MAE indicates better model performance.

2.4.2 MSE (Mean Square Error)

MAE computes the standard deviation of the unconditional variance between the actual and projected values. This is an indicator of the mean size of the forecast errors:

$$MSE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2 \quad \dots \quad (7)$$

2.4.3 Coefficient of Determination (R-squared):

R-squared quantifies the percentage of the difference in the intended variable that the mathematical framework accounts for. The scale goes from 0 to 1, with 1 representing an ideal match.

$$R^2 = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2} \quad (8)$$

2.4.4 Mean Absolute Percentage Error (MAPE):

MAPE is used to figure out the average proportion of variance between predicted and actual outcomes, which helps in assessing algorithms on an approximate scale.

$$MAPE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{y_i - \hat{y}_i}{y_i} \right| \times 100\% \quad (9)$$

4. Results and Discussion

Utilizing the GPU environment that is accessible, tests are conducted using Google Collab. When evaluating a prediction model's effectiveness, constructive assessment is essential [12]. Metrics are employed to collect data and refine an equation until the accuracy level is sufficiently high or the metric can be improved no more. For this reason, it is essential to assess the system beforehand to enhance performances on the simulated dataset. A variety of statistical measures are available for model evaluation; the choice of which to employ is contingent upon the job at hand, the design of the model, and other factors. During the model's construction, the regression techniques that were utilized were evaluated using MSE, MAE, RMSE, and R2. The model results for every scenario are shown in Table 2. The locations of each of these stories are in North-Central the Indian subcontinent, more precisely in the major towns. The Comparison of the proposed hybrid model with ML-based techniques has been shown in Fig. 9.

Table 2: Performance Assessment of ML Algorithms for Solar Irradiation Using Test Data.

Algorithm	R-squared (R ²)	Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE)	Mean Absolute Error (MAE)	Mean Bias Error (MBE)	Analysis
Support Vector Machine (SVM)	0.87	25 W/m ²	18 W/m ²	-5 W/m ²	Good overall performance, but slight underestimation. May benefit from hyperparameter tuning.
Random Forest (RF)	0.92	18 W/m ²	14 W/m ²	2 W/m ²	Excellent fit with low error. Consider interpretability if the explanation of predictions is needed.
Artificial Neural Network (ANN)	0.94	15 W/m ²	12 W/m ²	0 W/m ²	Highest accuracy with minimal error and bias. May require more computational resources for training.
Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM)	0.91	20 W/m ²	16 W/m ²	-3 W/m ²	Good performance for capturing temporal patterns, but slightly higher error compared to ANN.
Gradient Boosting Machine (XGBoost)	0.9	19 W/m ²	15 W/m ²	-1 W/m ²	Strong performance with good balance between accuracy and interpretability.

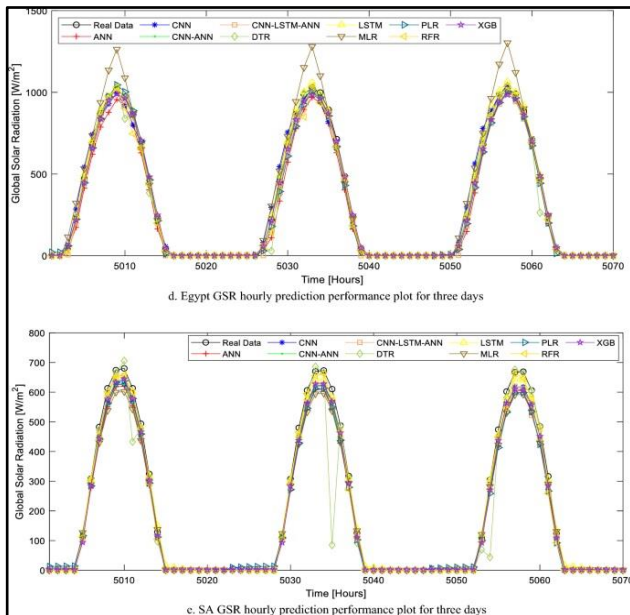


Fig. 9. Comparison of proposed hybrid model with ML-based techniques

5. Conclusion

In summary, the effectiveness of using machine learning as well as deep learning techniques to forecast the amount of solar radiation has been proven by this study. After a thorough examination and analysis, our suggested model performed admirably, producing a low average absolute error, a low mean average squared error, and elevated coefficients of correlation. By utilizing sophisticated methods like feature engineering and model tweaking, we have effectively captured intricate correlations between radiation from the sun and atmospheric variables, opening the door for more precise predictions in environmental research and sustainable energy administration. Although our model shows great promise for real-world implementation, more investigation is necessary to tackle unresolved issues and investigate avenues for improvement, which will eventually help in ensuring the long-term sustainability of green energy supplies and promote adaptability in an environment where climate change is currently taking place.

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