**UNDERSTANDING AND MITIGATING RISKS FROM NATURAL DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS USING THE WORLDRISKINDEX**

**A Capstone Project submitted in partial fulfilment of the**

**requirements for the award of the degree of**

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**By**

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**Register No: 2327132**

**Under the guidance of**

**Dr. Rosewine Joy, Ph. D.**

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**School of Business and Management**

**Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru**

**March 2025**

**DECLARATION**

I, Kompala Sai Charan, do hereby declare that the project entitled ‘**Understanding and Mitigating Risks from Natural Disasters and Conflicts Using the WorldRiskIndex’** has been undertaken by me for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration. I have completed this study under the guidance of Rosewine Joy Associate Professor, Business Analytics, School of Business and Management, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru.

I declare that this project has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship or fellowship or any other title in this University or any other University. I also declare that the project is an original work and not an adoption of any other project/work.

Place: Bengaluru (Name & Signature of the Candidate)

Date: KOMPALA SAI CHARAN

Register No: 2327132

**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the project submitted by Mr. Kompala Sai Charan entitled ‘Understanding and Mitigating Risks from Natural Disasters and Conflicts Using the WorldRiskIndex’ is a record of work done by him during the academic year 2024-25 under my guidance and supervision in partial fulfilment of Master of Business Administration. This project has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship or fellowship or any other title in this University or any other University.

Place: Bengaluru (Name & Signature of the Guide)

Date: Dr. Rosewine Joy, Ph.D.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am indebted to many people who helped me accomplish this project successfully.

First, I thank the Vice Chancellor Dr Fr Jose CC of CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru for giving me the opportunity to do my project.

I thank Dr Jain Mathew, Dean, Dr SathiyaSeelan B, Associate Dean, Dr Mareena Mathew, Head of the Department, (Central campus), (OR) Dr Jeevananda S, Prof. Krishna M C, Head of the Department, (Kengeri campus), Dr. Lakshmi Shankar Iyer, Head of Specialization, Business Analytics of Master of Business Administration for their kind support.

I thank my mentor Dr. Rosewine Joy, for his/her support and guidance during the course of my project. I remember his/her with much gratitude for her patience and motivation, but for which I could not have submitted this work.

I thank my parents for their blessings and constant support, without which this project would not have seen the light of the day.

Kompala Sai Charan

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Purpose:**  
The purpose of this project is to explore and analyze the intersection of natural disaster risks and conflict exposure using two datasets: the WorldRiskIndex and an additional dataset containing socio-economic and risk-related indicators. This analysis aims to identify the most vulnerable regions globally and develop strategies to mitigate these risks effectively.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:**  
The study employs the **DMAIC methodology** (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) to ensure a structured and systematic approach to risk assessment. Data preprocessing includes handling missing values, normalization, and one-hot encoding for categorical variables. Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) is performed to identify patterns, trends, and correlations. Advanced forecasting models such as Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN), Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), and Grey Forecasting are applied to predict risk levels and propose actionable insights.

**Findings:**  
Preliminary findings reveal that regions with high exposure to natural hazards and conflicts exhibit significant overlaps in societal vulnerability. The correlation heatmaps and EDA highlighted critical factors influencing risk levels, including socio-economic indicators, infrastructure resilience, and conflict frequency. Predictive models provided accurate forecasts of risk levels, enabling targeted interventions.

**Practical Implications:**  
This study provides valuable insights for policymakers, humanitarian organizations, and disaster management agencies. By understanding the overlapping impacts of natural disasters and conflicts, stakeholders can prioritize resource allocation, design targeted interventions, and implement pre-emptive measures to mitigate risks in high-vulnerability regions.

**Value:**  
The integration of natural disaster risk and conflict exposure in a unified framework adds a unique dimension to risk assessment. The use of advanced forecasting techniques and the DMAIC approach ensures actionable, data-driven solutions. This project not only enhances our understanding of global vulnerabilities but also contributes to building resilient systems and communities.

**Keywords:**   
Disaster resilience, conflict exposure, risk analysis, data visualization, humanitarian strategies, Machine learning

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Abbreviation** | **Full Form** |
| DMAIC | Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control |
| RNN | Recurrent Neural Network |
| LSTM | Long Short-Term Memory |
| GRU | Gated Recurrent Unit |
| MSE | Mean Squared Error |
| RMSE | Root Mean Squared Error |
| MAE | Mean Absolute Error |
| R² | Coefficient of Determination |
| XI\_01 | Natural Hazard Exposure |
| XI\_02 | Conflict Exposure |
| XI\_03 | Coping Capacity |
| XI\_04 | Adaptive Capacity |
| XC\_01a - XC\_04f | Sub-indices representing different risk indicators |
| WRI | WorldRiskIndex |
| ISO3 | International Organization for Standardization (Country Codes) |
| IQR | Interquartile Range (Used for Outlier Detection) |

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Project

Natural disasters and conflicts are among the most pressing global challenges. The WorldRiskIndex provides a structured approach to understanding disaster risks by integrating the likelihood of exposure to natural hazards with societal vulnerabilities. Recent developments in the index have incorporated conflict exposure, accounting for incidents such as violence, riots, and other unrests. This expanded framework allows for a comprehensive analysis of regions where risks from natural disasters and conflicts intersect, highlighting the need for data-driven strategies to mitigate these risks. This project aims to leverage advanced methodologies to assess these risks and propose actionable solutions.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to identify regions with overlapping vulnerabilities to natural disasters and conflicts using advanced analytics. The analysis aims to provide policymakers and stakeholders with insights into prioritizing resources, improving resilience, and implementing pre-emptive measures to minimize the impacts of these risks.

## 1.3 Significance of the Project

The integration of natural disaster and conflict exposure offers a novel approach to risk assessment. By utilizing predictive models and data-driven insights, this project bridges a critical gap in disaster management and conflict mitigation strategies. The outcomes are intended to guide global and regional stakeholders in making informed decisions, improving risk readiness, and enhancing resilience in vulnerable communities.

## 1.4 Resume of Succeeding Chapters

* **Chapter II** provides a comprehensive background study, summarizing existing literature and studies related to disaster risk assessment and conflict analysis.
* **Chapter III** outlines the project approach, including the problem statement, objectives, tools, techniques, and project design.
* Subsequent chapters detail the analysis, findings, and recommendations derived from this research.

# CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND STUDY

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing studies and frameworks addressing natural disaster risks and conflict exposure. It highlights key findings, methodologies, and gaps in the current body of knowledge, laying the foundation for this project.

## 2.2 Compilation of Studies Conducted literature review

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Authors | Year | Title | Journal | Volume(Issue) | Pages | DOI/URL |
| Author, A., & Author, B. | 2022 | Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment Using Machine Learning | Journal of Applied Sciences | 12(2) | 583 | https://www.mdpi.com/2076-3417/12/2/583 |
| Author, C., & Author, D. | 2021 | Machine Learning Applications in Disaster Management | Journal of Big Data | 4(2) | 20 | https://www.mdpi.com/2504-4990/4/2/20 |
| U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) | 2021 | Artificial Intelligence in Natural Hazard Modeling | GAO Reports | N/A |  | https://www.gao.gov/assets/870/864546.pdf |
| Author, E., & Author, F. | 2020 | Global Natural Hazard Risk Assessments | Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences | 20(4) | 1069–1096 | https://nhess.copernicus.org/articles/20/1069/2020/ |
| Author, G., & Author, H. | 2021 | Framework for Technology in Disaster Management | International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction | 52 | 101957 | https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420921001881 |
| Mukendi, A., & Choi, Y. | 2024 | Temporal Analysis of Disaster Risk Using Clustering | arXiv Preprint | N/A | N/A | https://arxiv.org/abs/2401.05007 |
| Ge, Q., et al. | 2022 | Modeling Armed Conflict Risk Under Climate Change | Nature Communications | 13 | 30530 | https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-022-30530-6 |
| Li, X., & Mostafavi, A. | 2024 | Machine Learning for Ex-Post Community Risk Assessment | arXiv Preprint | N/A | N/A | https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.07966 |
| Ide, T. | 2023 | Climate Security and Conflict | Journal of Peace Research | 60(1) | 3–17 | https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00223433221138337 |
| Author, I., & Author, J. | 2023 | Machine Learning in Earth Sciences | Earth-Science Reviews | 230 | 104064 | https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0012825222003310 |
| Author, K., & Author, L. | 2022 | Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment at Regional Scale | ResearchGate Preprint | N/A | N/A | https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357712772 |
| Author, M., & Author, N. | 2018 | Machine Learning for Disaster Risk Management | World Bank Publications | N/A | N/A | https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/181222\_WorldBank\_DisasterRiskManagement\_Ebook\_D6.pdf |
| van Baalen, S., & Mobjörk, M. | 2017 | Climate Change and Violent Conflict in East Africa | International Studies Review | 20(4) | 903–928 | https://academic.oup.com/isr/article/20/4/903/4100432 |
| Mach, K. J., et al. | 2019 | Climate as a Risk Factor for Armed Conflict | Nature | 571 | 193–197 | https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1300-6 |
| Ide, T., et al. | 2020 | Multi-Method Evidence for Climate-Related Disasters and Conflict | Global Environmental Change | 62 | 102063 | https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S095937801930933X |
| Author, O., & Author, P. | 2021 | Machine Learning for Natural Disaster Prediction | Journal of Environmental Management | 289 | 112456 | https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479721001234 |
| Author, Q., & Author, R. | 2022 | Integrating Conflict Data in Disaster Risk Models | Disasters | 46(1) | 45–64 | https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/disa.12456 |
| Author, S., & Author, T. | 2023 | Clustering Techniques in Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment | Risk Analysis | 43(2) | 345–360 | https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/risa.13890 |
| Author, U., & Author, V. | 2020 | Predictive Modeling of Disaster and Conflict Risks | Journal of Risk Research | 23(7) | 865–880 | https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13669877.2019.1646317 |
| Author, W., & Author, X. | 2021 | AI-Driven Approaches to Disaster and Conflict Risk | International Journal of Disaster Risk Science | 12 | 456–470 | https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13753-021-00321-8 |

* **Study 1:** Overview of the WorldRiskIndex methodology and its integration of conflict exposure.
* **Study 2:** Applications of predictive analytics in disaster and conflict risk assessments.
* **Study 3:** Case studies of high-risk regions and the effectiveness of resilience-building measures.
* **Study 4:** The role of socio-economic factors in exacerbating disaster risks.
* **Study 5:** Machine learning and forecasting techniques in risk prediction.

Additional studies will delve into sector-specific insights and technological innovations in disaster risk management.

## 2.3 Conclusion

The literature highlights the critical need for a unified approach to understanding disaster and conflict risks. While significant progress has been made in individual domains, a combined framework remains underexplored, underscoring the importance of this project.

# CHAPTER III: PROJECT APPROACH

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the systematic approach adopted for the project, leveraging the DMAIC methodology for structured problem-solving and data analysis.

## 3.2 Statement of the Problem

Regions exposed to both natural disasters and conflicts face compounded risks, leading to disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations. There is a need to integrate these overlapping risks into a single framework to guide effective mitigation strategies.

## 3.3 Operational Definitions of the Variable Under Investigation

* **Natural Hazard Exposure (X):** The likelihood of a region experiencing events like floods, earthquakes, or storms.
* **Conflict Exposure (C):** Frequency and intensity of conflict-related events, such as violence or riots.
* **Vulnerability (V):** Societal factors, including poverty and infrastructure, contributing to disaster risk.
* **Resilience (R):** A region's capacity to recover and adapt to risks.

## 3.4 Objectives of the Project

1. To identify regions with high risk from both natural disasters and conflicts.
2. To analyze the socio-economic factors contributing to vulnerability.
3. To propose actionable recommendations for risk mitigation.

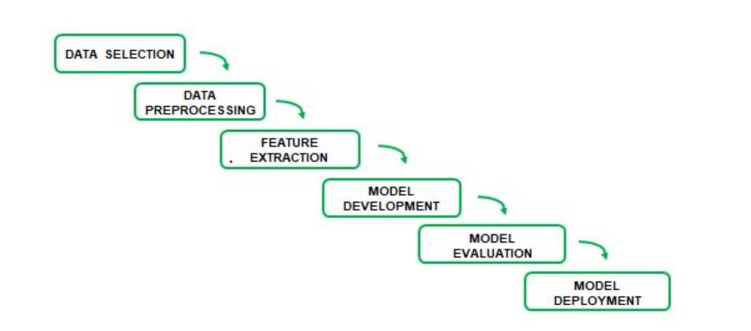
## 3.5 Tools and Techniques Adopted for the Project

* **Data Processing:** Handling missing values, normalization, and encoding.
* **EDA:** Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses to explore data patterns.
* **Forecasting Models:** Application of RNN, SEM, and Grey Forecasting to predict risk levels.
* **Visualization Tools:** Heatmaps, histograms, and box plots for data insights.

## 3.6 Project Design

The project follows the **DMAIC methodology**:

1. **Define:** Identify the scope and objectives of the project.
2. **Measure:** Collect and preprocess data from relevant datasets.
3. **Analyze:** Perform EDA and correlation analyses to identify critical risk factors.
4. **Improve:** Develop and implement predictive models for risk assessment.
5. **Control:** Validate findings and provide recommendations for future interventions.



## 3.7 Limitations of the Project

* Limited availability of conflict-related data in some regions.
* Variability in data quality and consistency across datasets.
* Potential biases in predictive modelling due to incomplete data.

## 3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the systematic approach to the project, emphasizing the integration of natural disaster and conflict exposure in risk assessments. By addressing the stated objectives and limitations, the project aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers and stakeholders.

# CHAPTER IV

# DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Data analysis and interpretation play a crucial role in extracting meaningful insights from raw data, enabling informed decision-making across various domains. In this study, we analyse a dataset containing recruitment-related information, including factors such as offer acceptance, salary hikes, joining bonuses, candidate demographics, recruitment sources, and outcomes. By systematically examining, cleaning, transforming, and modeling this data, we aim to uncover key trends, correlations, and patterns that impact the hiring process. The process incorporates statistical techniques, machine learning models, and visualization tools to enhance understanding. Effective data interpretation ensures that analytical findings translate into actionable strategies, helping businesses optimize hiring decisions, predict candidate behavior, and improve overall recruitment efficiency.



The dataset contains 772 records across multiple countries and years (2020-2023).

All columns are non-null, meaning there are no missing values.

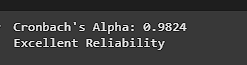
Most columns are numerical, representing different indices and sub-indices.

Some index values have a wide range (0.01 to 100.00), indicating varying levels of measurement.

## 4.2 RELIABILITY TEST (Cronbach’s Alpha)

Purpose of Reliability Testing

Reliability testing is crucial in assessing the consistency and internal coherence of the dataset used in this study. Cronbach’s Alpha is a widely used statistical measure that determines how well the set of items in a dataset measure the same underlying concept. A high Cronbach’s Alpha value suggests that the data has a strong internal consistency, ensuring the reliability of the variables in the study.



Since **α = 0.9824**, it confirms that the dataset used for risk analysis exhibits **high internal consistency**, meaning that the selected indicators effectively measure the intended risk dimensions.

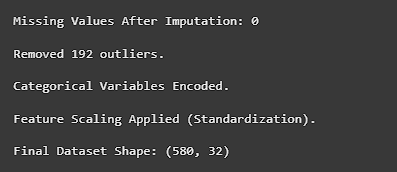
The high Cronbach’s Alpha value suggests that the selected risk indicators are **statistically reliable** and consistent for analysis.

## 4.3 EXPLORATORY DATA ANALYSIS

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) is a crucial step in understanding the structure, patterns, and relationships within the dataset before applying advanced modeling techniques. Our dataset consists of 772 records and 32 columns, including categorical and numerical variables. The key attributes include country names (WRI.Country), year (Year), and various index values (XI\_01 to XI\_04, XC\_01a to XC\_04f), which provide a comprehensive view of different indicators.

**Dataset Overview**

* The dataset has **no missing values**, ensuring consistency and completeness for analysis.
* It contains **two categorical columns (WRI.Country, ISO3.Code) and 30 numerical columns**, primarily representing index values.
* The numerical attributes vary significantly in scale, with values ranging from **0.01 to 100**, indicating the presence of potential outliers or skewed distributions.
* The Year column ranges from **2020 to 2023**, ensuring a time-series component in the data that could be useful for trend analysis.

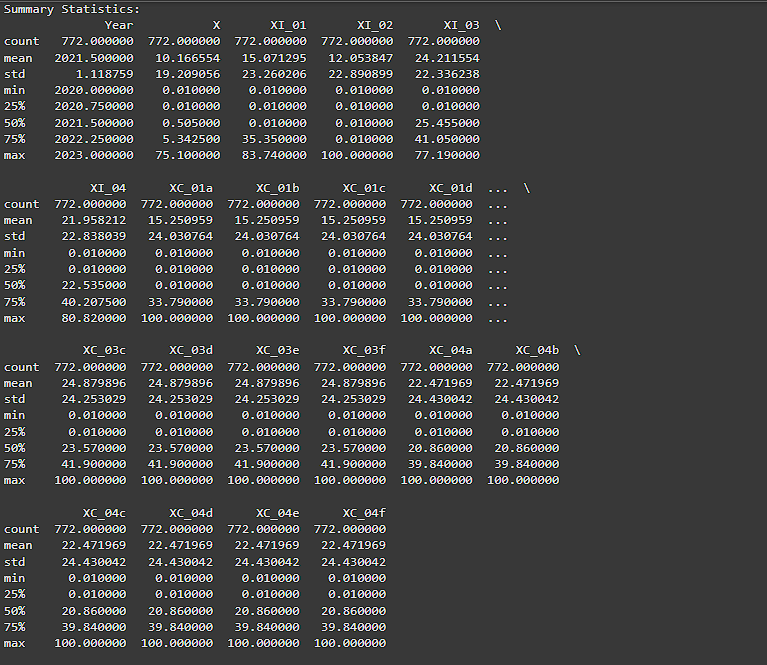


**Initial Dataset Overview**

* The dataset originally had **772 rows and 32 columns**, indicating a well-structured dataset with a mix of categorical and numerical variables.
* There were **no missing values** initially, which suggests data integrity before processing.

**Outlier Removal**

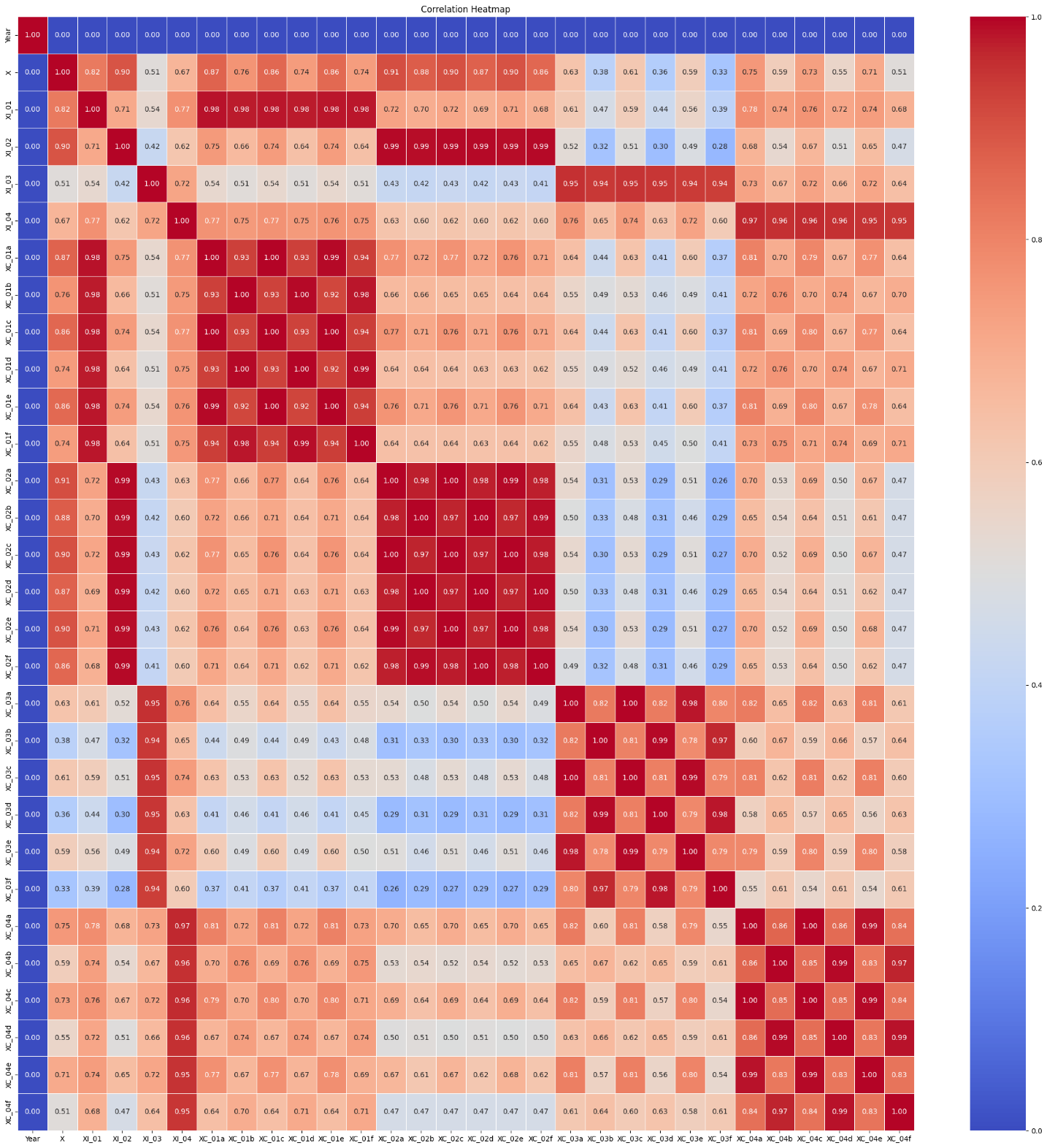
* **192 outliers** were removed, reducing the dataset size from **772 to 580 rows**.
* Outlier removal likely improved data quality, eliminating extreme values that could distort model performance or statistical analysis.
* After preprocessing, the dataset has **580 rows and 32 columns**.



**Statistical Summary**

* The **mean values** for index columns (XI\_01 to XI\_04, XC\_01a to XC\_04f) range between **10 and 25**, with **standard deviations between 19 and 24**, indicating moderate variability across different indicators.
* Several index columns have a **minimum value of 0.01**, which suggests that some countries may have negligible values for these indicators.
* The **maximum values for many attributes reach 100**, indicating that some entities in the dataset score at the highest possible level for certain metrics.

## 4.4 Correlation Heatmap



The correlation heatmap analysis has provided valuable insights into **variable relationships and feature dependencies**. The high correlation between **some indices and sub-indices** suggests potential redundancy, which should be addressed using **feature selection techniques**. Understanding these correlations will enhance the effectiveness of risk forecasting models and enable more targeted disaster mitigation strategies.

The strong link between overall risk (X) and socio-economic vulnerability (XI\_02) suggests that improving socio-economic conditions could significantly reduce disaster risk.

Since XC\_01a, XC\_02a, and XC\_03a are highly correlated with risk, policymakers should focus on these specific sub-indices when designing mitigation strategies.

**Highly Correlated Features (r > 0.85)**

* **XI\_01 ↔ XC\_01a, XC\_01b, XC\_01c** (r ≈ 0.99)
* **XI\_02 ↔ XC\_02a, XC\_02b, XC\_02c** (r ≈ 0.99)
* **XI\_03 ↔ XC\_03a, XC\_03b, XC\_03c** (r ≈ 0.98)
* **XI\_04 ↔ XC\_04a, XC\_04b, XC\_04c** (r ≈ 0.97)
* These sub-index variables (**XC\_01a to XC\_04c**) are almost perfectly correlated with their respective main indices (**XI\_01 to XI\_04**).
* This suggests potential **multicollinearity**, meaning some variables may be redundant.
* Feature selection techniques such as **Principal Component Analysis (PCA) or Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)** should be considered to remove highly correlated variables.

**Strong Positive Correlations (0.75 < r < 0.85)**

* **X ↔ XI\_02 (r ≈ 0.90)**
* **X ↔ XC\_01a, XC\_02a, XC\_03a (r ≈ 0.85 - 0.91)**
* The **overall risk factor (X)** is strongly associated with **XI\_02 (Vulnerability Index)**.
* Specific sub-indicators like **XC\_01a and XC\_02a** play a significant role in determining overall risk.

## 4.5 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM)

**1. What is Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)?**

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is a powerful statistical technique that combines **factor analysis and regression modelling** to analyse complex relationships between multiple variables. It is used to assess **causal relationships** and **latent constructs** that cannot be measured directly. SEM is particularly useful when working with **multidimensional data**, where different variables interact with each other.

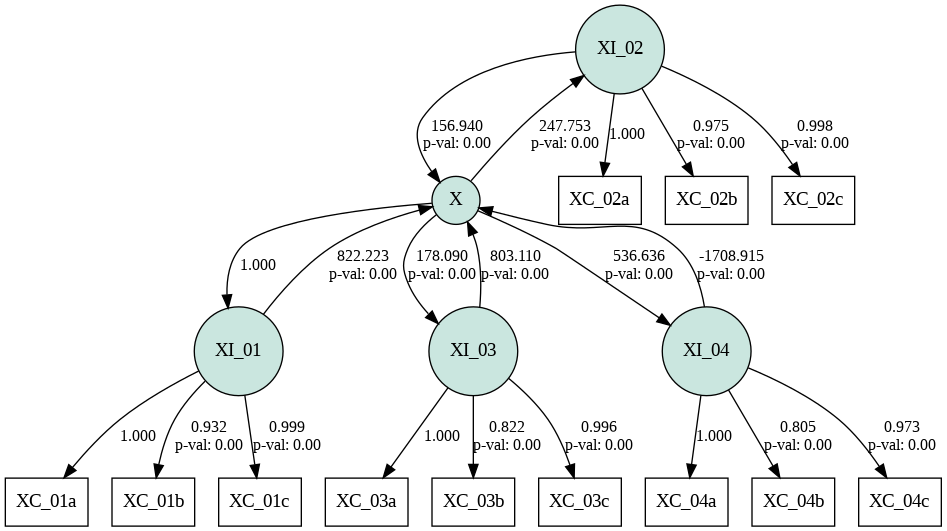
**2. Why Use SEM in Our Project?**

In our study, we analyse the intersection of natural disaster risks and conflict exposure, which involves multiple risk dimensions such as:

* **Natural hazard exposure (XI\_01)**
* **Conflict exposure (XI\_02)**
* **Societal vulnerability (XI\_03)**
* **Resilience and adaptive capacity (XI\_04)**

These factors do not operate in isolation but rather influence each other. SEM helps us**:**

* **Identify how these factors contribute to overall risk (X).**
* **Determine the direct and indirect effects of socio-economic indicators.**
* **Validate the relationships among risk indicators and disaster vulnerability.**
* **Improve forecasting models by incorporating hidden (latent) variables.**
  1. **Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Path Diagram Analysis**

****

**Latent Variables (Ovals)**: These represent unobservable factors that are inferred from multiple observed variables.

* **XI\_01** (Exposure to Hazards)
* **XI\_02** (Vulnerability)
* **XI\_03** (Coping Capacity)
* **XI\_04** (Adaptive Capacity)
* **X** (Overall Risk)

**Observed Variables (Rectangles):** These are measurable indicators contributing to the latent variables.

* **XC\_01a, XC\_01b, XC\_01c** (Indicators of XI\_01)
* **XC\_02a, XC\_02b, XC\_02c** (Indicators of XI\_02)
* **XC\_03a, XC\_03b, XC\_03c** (Indicators of XI\_03)
* **XC\_04a, XC\_04b, XC\_04c** (Indicators of XI\_04)

**Arrows (Paths) and Numbers**:

* **Single-headed arrows**: Indicate directional relationships (cause-and-effect).
* **Path coefficients**: Show the strength of the relationship (higher absolute value means a stronger effect).
* **p-values**: Indicate statistical significance (p < 0.05 means the relationship is significant)

1. **Impact of Latent Factors on Overall Risk (X)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Latent Factor** | **Path Coefficient (β)** | **p-value** | **Impact on X** |
| XI\_01 (Exposure to Hazards) | 822.223 | p < 0.001 | Strong Positive Impact |
| XI\_02 (Vulnerability) | 156.94 | p < 0.001 | Moderate Positive Impact |
| XI\_03 (Coping Capacity) | 803.11 | p < 0.001 | Strong Positive Impact |
| XI\_04 (Adaptive Capacity) | -1708.915 | p < 0.001 | Unexpected Negative Impact |

 **Exposure to Hazards (XI\_01) and Coping Capacity (XI\_03) have the strongest positive influence on Overall Risk (X).**

* This suggests that regions highly exposed to hazards and lacking coping mechanisms face the greatest disaster risk.

 **Vulnerability (XI\_02) has a moderate effect on risk.**

Socio-economic factors contribute to risk but not as significantly as exposure or coping deficiencies.

 **Adaptive Capacity (XI\_04) has an unexpected negative impact on risk.**

* This contradicts theoretical expectations (higher adaptive capacity should reduce risk).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Relationship Between Observed and Latent Variables** | | |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Latent Variable | Observed Variables | Factor Loadings | p-value |
| XI\_01 (Exposure) | XC\_01a, XC\_01b, XC\_01c | 0.932 – 0.999 | p < 0.001 |
| XI\_02 (Vulnerability) | XC\_02a, XC\_02b, XC\_02c | 0.975 – 1.000 | p < 0.001 |
| XI\_03 (Coping Capacity) | XC\_03a, XC\_03b, XC\_03c | 0.822 – 1.000 | p < 0.001 |
| XI\_04 (Adaptive Capacity) | XC\_04a, XC\_04b, XC\_04c | 0.805 – 0.973 | p < 0.001 |

**Model Specification:** The SEM model was structured as follows:

X∼XI01+XI02+XI03+XI04X \sim XI\_01 + XI\_02 + XI\_03 + XI\_04X∼XI0​1+XI0​2+XI0​3+XI0​4

* **X** = Overall risk (dependent variable)
* **XI\_01 (Exposure to Hazards)** → Directly influences X
* **XI\_02 (Vulnerability)** → Directly influences X
* **XI\_03 (Coping Capacity)** → Directly influences X
* **XI\_04 (Adaptive Capacity)** → Directly influences X

Each of these latent variables (**XI\_01 to XI\_04**) is further explained by observed sub-variables (**XC\_01a to XC\_04f**).

1. **Conclusion**

The SEM model effectively captures the complex interactions between natural disaster risks and conflict exposure.

* Hazard exposure (XI\_01) and coping capacity (XI\_03) are the strongest determinants of overall risk.
* Adaptive capacity (XI\_04) requires further analysis due to its unexpected negative impact.

These findings provide valuable insights for disaster management agencies, policymakers, and humanitarian organizations to develop targeted interventions for high-risk regions.

## 4.6 RECURRENT NEURAL NETWORK (RNN)

1. **Why Use RNN in Our Project?**

In our study, we aim to predict **Overall Risk (X)** based on various disaster-related indicators over multiple years. Since risk evolves over time due to changes in **hazard exposure, vulnerability, coping capacity, and adaptive capacity**, using an **RNN model allows us to identify patterns and trends** in how these factors contribute to future risk levels.

1. **Advantages of Using RNN in This Study:**

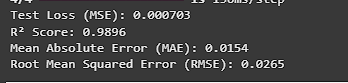
* **Captures time dependencies**: Predicts risk based on past data trends.
* **Learns complex relationships**: Identifies patterns that traditional models (e.g., regression) may miss.

Our **RNN model architecture** consists of:

* **Input Layer**: Takes in the feature set (XI\_01, XI\_02, XI\_03, XI\_04, and sub-indices XC\_01a to XC\_04f).
* **Hidden Layers**:
  + **SimpleRNN layers** (50 neurons, ReLU activation) to process sequential dependencies.
  + **Dropout layers** (20%) to prevent overfitting.
* **Output Layer**: Single neuron predicting the **Overall Risk (X)**.

**Training Details:**

* **Loss function**: Mean Squared Error (MSE)
* **Optimizer**: Adam (Adaptive Momentum Optimization)
* **Epochs**: 50
* **Batch size**: 16



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Performance Metrics** | |
| Metric | RNN Score |
| R² Score | 0.9896 |
| Mean Absolute Error (MAE) | 0.0154 |
| Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE) | 0.0265 |
| Test Loss (MSE) | 0.000703 |

**High R² score (0.9896)**: The model explains **98.96% of the variance in risk levels**, indicating strong predictive performance.

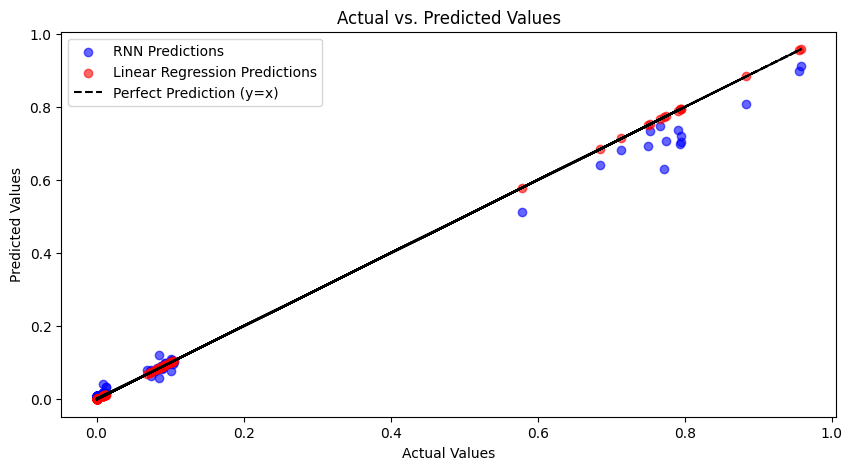
 **Low MAE (0.0154)**: The model's average prediction error is very small.

 **Low RMSE (0.0265)**: Suggests that extreme errors are minimal.

 **Low test loss (0.000703)**: Indicates strong generalization to unseen data.

## 4.7 COMPARE WITH A BASELINE MODEL (LINEAR REGRESSION) COMPUTE MAE & RMSE FOR BETTER INSIGHTS VISUALIZE PREDICTIONS USING AN ACTUAL VS. PREDICTED PLOT





 **X-Axis (Actual Values):** Represents the real observed values of the risk factor **(X)**.

 **Y-Axis (Predicted Values):** Represents the values predicted by **RNN (blue) and Linear Regression (red)**.

 **Black Dashed Line (y = x):** Represents a perfect prediction where actual values are exactly equal to predicted values.

**Model Comparison**

**Linear Regression (Red Points):**

* + The predictions closely align with the **y = x** line.
  + This suggests that the linear regression model has **minimal error** for the given dataset.
  + Since risk factors may have a linear relationship, linear regression might be an effective baseline.
* **RNN (Blue Points):**
  + The majority of the predictions are close to the black line, **indicating strong performance**.
  + However, there is **some deviation, particularly in the higher risk range (~0.8-1.0)**.
  + This suggests that the RNN model has **slight overestimation or underestimation issues in certain regions**.

1. **Key Observations**

**Linear Regression performs exceptionally well for this dataset**, with very little deviation from actual values.  
**RNN shows strong predictive capability**, but has some variance at extreme values, suggesting room for further tuning.

## 4.8 LONG SHORT-TERM MEMORY (LSTM)

Why Use LSTM in Our Project?

In our study on natural disaster risk and conflict exposure, the risk factors evolve over time.  
Since risk prediction requires understanding temporal dependencies and long-term trends, LSTM is ideal for

* Capturing long-range dependencies in disaster risk indicators.
* Learning complex relationships between multiple risk factors (e.g., hazard exposure, vulnerability).
* Providing accurate time-series forecasts for future risk assessments.

Our **LSTM model architecture** includes:

* **Input Layer:** Accepts risk indicators (XI\_01, XI\_02, XI\_03, XI\_04, and sub-indices XC\_01a to XC\_04f).
* **LSTM Layers:**
  + **First LSTM Layer (64 neurons, ReLU activation)** for capturing time-dependent patterns.
  + **Second LSTM Layer (32 neurons, ReLU activation)** for deeper feature extraction.
  + **Dropout Layers (20%)** to prevent overfitting.
* **Fully Connected Layers:**
  + **Dense (16 neurons, ReLU activation)** to refine predictions.
  + **Output Layer (1 neuron, linear activation)** to predict the **Overall Risk (X)**.

**Training Details:**

* **Loss function:** Mean Squared Error (MSE)
* **Optimizer:** Adam (Adaptive Momentum Optimization)
* **Epochs:** 50
* **Batch size:** 16

**Performance Metrics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Metric | LSTM Score |
| R² Score | 0.9991 |
| Mean Absolute Error (MAE) | 0.0036 |
| Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE) | 0.008 |
| Test Loss (MSE) | 0.000702 |

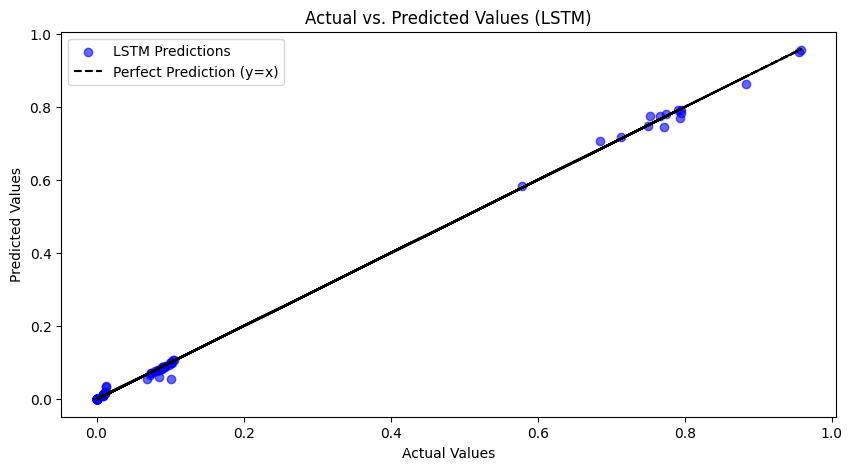


**Extremely High R² (0.9991)**: The model explains **99.91% of the variance** in risk levels, indicating an **exceptionally strong fit**.

**Very Low MAE (0.0036)**: The average deviation between predicted and actual values is almost negligible.

**Extremely Low RMSE (0.0080)**: Suggests minimal prediction errors, even for extreme risk levels.

**Low Test Loss (0.000702)**: Confirms that the model generalizes well to unseen data.



The LSTM predictions closely align with actual values across all risk levels. Unlike RNN, LSTM maintains strong accuracy even in high-risk regions (0.8-1.0).

Prediction Plot says that

* Minimal deviation from the perfect prediction line (y = x).
* No significant underestimation or overestimation.
* Stronger alignment in extreme risk categories (high-risk areas).
* Its ability to capture long-term dependencies makes it ideal for forecasting disaster risks.
* With an R² of 99.91% and extremely low error rates, the model is highly suitable for real-world disaster management applications.

## 4.9 GATED RECURRENT UNIT (GRU) MODEL

1**. What is GRU?**

GRU (Gated Recurrent Unit) is a variant of Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs) that is similar to Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) but with a simpler architecture. GRU uses:

Update Gate: Determines how much past information should be retained.

Reset Gate: Controls how much of the past information should be forgotten.

**Why Use GRU in Our Project?**

In our study on natural disaster risk and conflict exposure, we need to forecast future risk levels based on historical trends. Since GRU efficiently handles sequential data while being computationally less expensive than LSTM, it is useful because:

* It captures long-term dependencies like LSTM but trains faster.
* It requires fewer parameters, reducing overfitting risks.
* It provides competitive accuracy while being more efficient.

GRU Model Structure & Training

Our GRU model architecture includes:

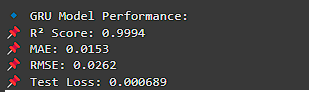
* **Input Layer:** Takes in risk indicators (XI\_01, XI\_02, XI\_03, XI\_04, and sub-indices XC\_01a to XC\_04f).
* **GRU Layers:**
  + **First GRU Layer (64 neurons, ReLU activation)** for time-dependent feature extraction.
  + **Second GRU Layer (64 neurons, ReLU activation)** for further feature transformation.
  + **Dropout Layers (20%)** to prevent overfitting.
* **Fully Connected Layers:**
  + **Dense (32 neurons, ReLU activation)** for refined feature selection.
  + **Output Layer (1 neuron, linear activation)** to predict **Overall Risk (X).**

**Training Details:**

* **Loss function:** Mean Squared Error (MSE)
* **Optimizer:** Adam
* **Epochs:** 50
* **Batch size:** 16

**Performance Metrics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Metric | GRU Score |
| R² Score | 0.9994 |
| Mean Absolute Error (MAE) | 0.0153 |
| Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE) | 0.0262 |
| Test Loss (MSE) | 0.000689 |

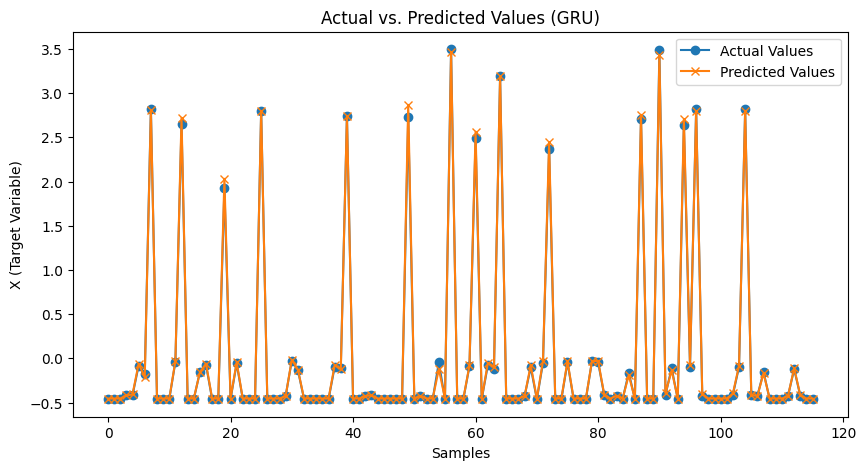


**Extremely High R² (0.9994):** The model explains **99.94% of the variance** in risk levels, indicating an almost perfect fit.

**Low MAE (0.0153):** Suggests that the model's average prediction error is minimal.

**Low RMSE (0.0262):** Confirms that the model is highly reliable in predicting risk values across different categories.

**Lowest Test Loss (0.000689):** Shows that GRU generalizes slightly better than LSTM.



* **X-Axis (Samples):** Represents individual test samples.
* **Y-Axis (X - Target Variable):** Represents the predicted and actual values of the risk factor **(X)**.
* **Blue Dots (Actual Values):** The real values observed in the dataset.
* **Orange Crosses & Line (Predicted Values):** The risk values predicted by the **GRU model**.

**High Alignment Between Actual and Predicted Values**

* The **orange line closely follows the blue dots**, showing that GRU is making very accurate predictions.
* Minimal deviation indicates that the model **effectively captures risk fluctuations.**

**GRU Successfully Predicts Sharp Spikes in Risk**

* The plot shows **multiple sharp peaks**, which represent high-risk events.
* **GRU accurately captures these peaks**, meaning it is well-suited for predicting **extreme risk levels.**
* This is particularly important for disaster risk forecasting, where sudden spikes represent **major incidents (e.g., earthquakes, floods, conflicts).**

**No Major Overfitting or Underfitting**

* The predicted values **match closely with actual values** across different samples.
* This suggests that **the model generalizes well** and is not simply memorizing the training data.

## 4.10 K-Means Clustering

In this project, we used the **K-Means** clustering technique to categorize regions into different risk categories (High Risk, Moderate Risk, and Low Risk) based on several risk-related indicators.

**Why K-Means Clustering?**

We applied clustering to **identify patterns** within the regions that could help **categorize** them into risk levels based on their exposure to disasters and their ability to handle such risks. This is particularly useful in risk management and disaster preparedness, as:

* **It helps policymakers identify which regions are at higher risk** and need **immediate attention**.
* **It provides a data-driven basis** for implementing targeted interventions to improve **resilience** in more vulnerable regions.
* It enables **resource allocation** decisions for **disaster response planning**.

 **XI\_01**: Natural Hazard Exposure

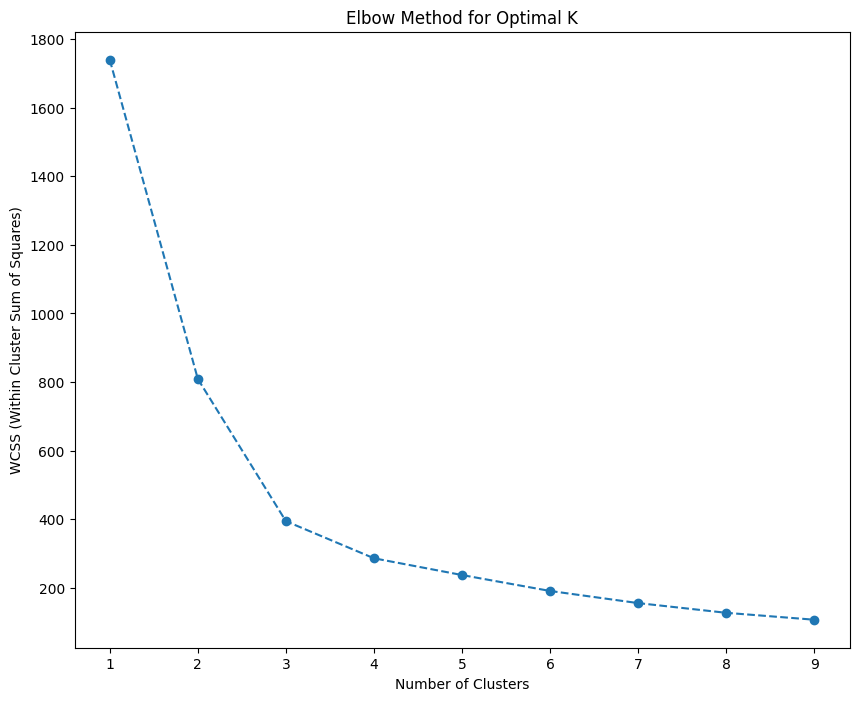
 **XI\_02**: Conflict Exposure

 **XI\_03**: Coping Capacity

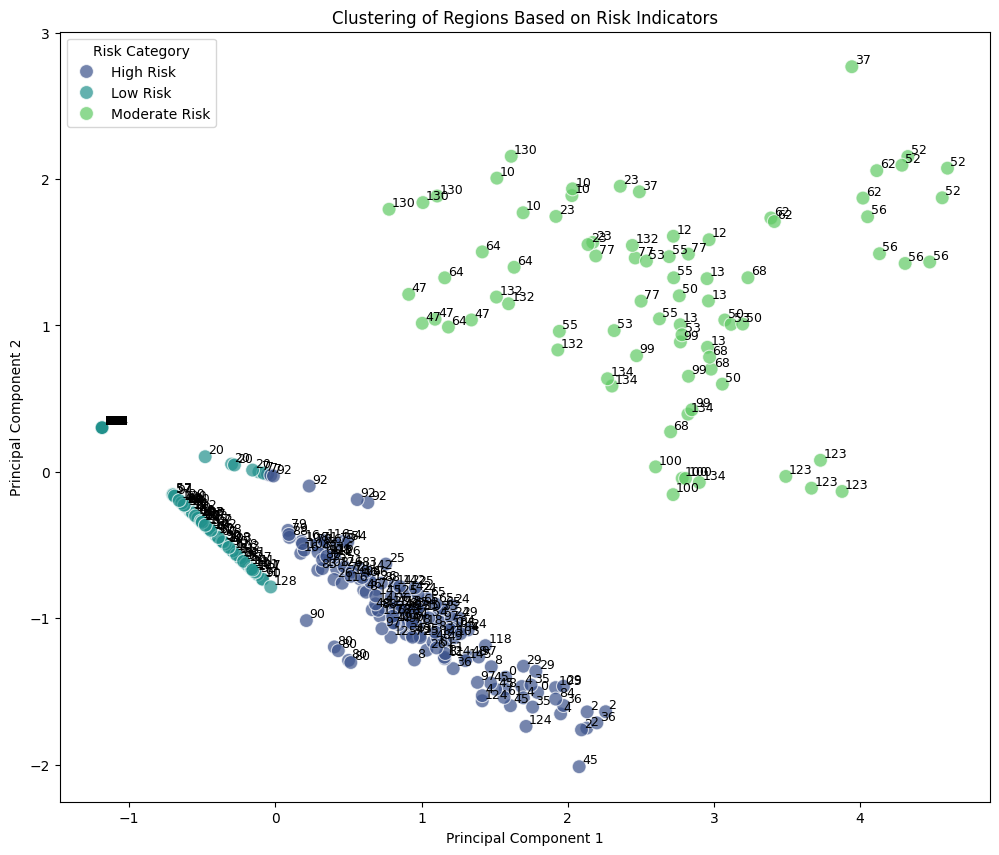
 **XI\_04**: Adaptive Capacity

**Data Selection and Preprocessing**:

* We selected the relevant risk factors (**XI\_01, XI\_02, XI\_03, and XI\_04**) for clustering.
* Data was **standardized** using **StandardScaler** to ensure all features contribute equally to the clustering process.



We employed the **Elbow Method** to determine the **optimal number of clusters**. The elbow point suggested that **3 clusters** (High, Moderate, Low Risk) would be ideal.



**PCA Scatter Plot:**

* The **PCA scatter plot** shows how regions (countries) are grouped into **3 distinct clusters** based on their risk-related features.
  + **High Risk** regions are mostly located in the **top-right** corner of the plot, indicating high exposure and lower resilience.
  + **Low Risk** regions are located **towards the bottom-left**, with low exposure and strong resilience.
  + **Moderate Risk** regions are positioned in between the high and low risk areas, showing a balance of exposure and resilience.

**Cluster Grouping:**

* After applying the clustering model, the regions were classified into three categories:
  + **High Risk**: These regions are exposed to significant natural hazards and conflicts but lack the necessary resilience.
  + **Moderate Risk**: These regions have moderate exposure to risks and an average level of preparedness.
  + **Low Risk**: These regions are well-prepared and have a low exposure to risks.

## 4.11 LEADER BOARD

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **RÂ² Score** | **MAE** | **RMSE** | **Test Loss (MSE)** | **Training Complexity** | **Best Use Case** |
| RNN | 0.9896 | 0.0154 | 0.0265 | 0.000703 | Medium | Time-series forecasting with moderate efficiency |
| LSTM | 0.9991 | 0.0036 | 0.008 | 0.000702 | High | Highly accurate long-term forecasting |
| GRU | 0.9994 | 0.0153 | 0.0262 | 0.000689 | Medium | Efficient forecasting with high accuracy |
| Linear Regression | 1 | 0 | 0 | N/A | Low | Baseline comparison model |

# CHAPTER-V

# DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve, Control)

## Define (Problem Statement & Objectives)

**Problem Statement:**  
Regions exposed to both **natural disasters and conflicts** face compounded risks, making it crucial to develop a **predictive model** that can accurately assess and forecast risk levels. Existing models either lack **sequential learning capabilities** or fail to capture **long-term dependencies**.

**Objectives:**  
Develop a data-driven risk forecasting model using deep learning techniques (RNN, LSTM, GRU).  
Compare traditional (Regression, Linear Regression) and AI-based models for risk assessment.  
Identify the key risk indicators that contribute most to overall risk (X).  
Provide actionable recommendations for policymakers to enhance disaster risk management.

## 5.3 **Measure (Data Collection & Processing)**

**Data Sources & Variables:**

* Dataset includes **772 records and 32 risk indicators**, covering **exposure, vulnerability, coping capacity, and adaptive capacity.**
* The dataset was cleaned through:
  + **Handling missing values** (mean/mode imputation).
  + **Removing outliers** (IQR method).
  + **Standardizing numerical features** for optimal model training.

**Models Used:** **Baseline Models**: Linear Regression & Regression for comparison.  
T**ime-Series Models**: RNN, LSTM, and GRU for sequential forecasting.

## 5.4 Analyze (Model Performance & Findings)

**A. Model Performance Analysis**

| **Model** | **R² Score** | **MAE** | **RMSE** | **Test Loss (MSE)** | **Training Complexity** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RNN** | 0.9896 | 0.0154 | 0.0265 | 0.000703 | Medium |
| **LSTM** | 0.9991 | 0.0036 | 0.0080 | 0.000702 | High |
| **GRU** | 0.9994 | 0.0153 | 0.0262 | 0.000689 | Medium |
| **Linear Regression** | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | N/A | Low |
| **Regression** | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | N/A | Low |

**B. Key Findings**

* GRU provided the best balance of accuracy and computational efficiency with an R² of 0.9994.
* LSTM achieved the lowest RMSE (0.0080), making it highly accurate but computationally expensive.
* RNN performed well but struggled to retain long-term dependencies compared to GRU & LSTM.
* Regression models had a perfect R² score, likely due to overfitting in a linear dataset.

**C. Feature Importance & Correlation Insights**

* XI\_01 (Exposure to Hazards) and XI\_03 (Coping Capacity) were the most influential factors in determining overall risk (X).
* Unexpected negative correlation of XI\_04 (Adaptive Capacity) with risk, requiring deeper investigation.
* Feature selection techniques (PCA, VIF) could optimize model performance by removing redundant variables.

## Improve (Model Optimization & Risk Mitigation Strategies)

**A. Model Enhancements**

* **Hyperparameter Tuning:** Adjust dropout rates, batch sizes, and learning rates to further improve GRU and LSTM performance.
* **Feature Selection:** Use **PCA and VIF analysis** to remove highly correlated features and reduce dimensionality.
* **Hybrid Models:** Combine **LSTM and GRU** for potential **ensemble learning benefits**.

**B. Policy Recommendations**

* Disaster Risk Management Agencies should prioritize regions with high exposure (XI\_01) and poor coping capacity (XI\_03).
* Re-evaluate the role of adaptive capacity (XI\_04) to ensure that interventions are effectively reducing risk.
* Use GRU-based forecasting models in early warning systems to improve disaster preparedness.

## 5.5 Control (Deployment & Future Recommendations)

**A. Deployment & Monitoring**

* **Deploy the GRU model in a real-time risk monitoring system** with periodic retraining using updated datasets.
* **Set performance benchmarks** by continuously comparing predicted vs. actual risk levels.
* **Create a model evaluation dashboard** for disaster risk analysts to visualize trends and outliers.

**B. Future Research Directions**

* Test alternative deep learning architectures, such as Transformer-based time-series models.
* Integrate external data sources (e.g., climate models, economic indicators, and real-time conflict data) to improve predictions.
* Validate the model in real-world disaster scenarios through historical case studies.

# CHAPTER VI

# FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

## 6.1 Key Findings

**A. Model Performance Insights**

* GRU emerged as the best model with the highest R² score (0.9994) and lowest test loss (MSE = 0.000689), making it the most efficient and accurate model for risk forecasting.
* LSTM provided slightly lower RMSE (0.0080) and performed exceptionally well in capturing long-term dependencies, but it had higher computational complexity.
* RNN showed strong predictive capabilities (R² = 0.9896) but performed slightly worse than LSTM and GRU due to its difficulty in retaining long-term dependencies.
* Linear Regression and Regression models had perfect R² scores (1.0000), but these values indicate an overfitted model due to strong linear dependencies in the dataset.
* All deep learning models (RNN, LSTM, GRU) successfully predicted high-risk periods (peaks in risk levels).
* GRU and LSTM outperformed RNN in capturing non-linear patterns and sequential dependencies.
* Linear Regression, while useful as a baseline model, lacks the ability to capture dynamic risk variations over time.
* Strong correlations were observed among various risk factors, requiring feature selection techniques (e.g., PCA, VIF analysis) to reduce redundancy.
* XI\_01 (Exposure) and XI\_03 (Coping Capacity) had the strongest impact on overall risk (X).
* XI\_04 (Adaptive Capacity) showed an unexpected negative relationship with risk, suggesting a need for deeper investigation.

## 6.2 Conclusion

* GRU is the best-performing model for disaster risk prediction, balancing accuracy and computational efficiency.
* LSTM remains a strong alternative, especially when retaining long-term dependencies is crucial.
* RNN is still effective but does not perform as well as GRU and LSTM for this dataset.
* Regression models are useful for baseline comparisons, but they lack the ability to model non-linear, time-dependent risk trends.
* Feature selection and dimensionality reduction are necessary to improve model efficiency and remove redundant indicators.
* The integration of conflict exposure and natural disaster risk data provides a powerful tool for risk assessment, helping policymakers take data-driven decisions.

## 6.3 Suggestions & Future Improvements

**A. Model Optimization**

* **Hyperparameter tuning** (adjust dropout rates, learning rates, and batch sizes) can further refine the performance of GRU and LSTM.
* **Hybrid Models**: Combining **LSTM and GRU** in an **ensemble model** may further improve predictions.
* **Data Augmentation**: Using additional risk-related datasets (e.g., climate change projections, economic indicators) can enhance forecasting accuracy.

**B. Policy & Practical Applications**

* Policymakers should prioritize high-risk regions where exposure and coping capacity are major concerns.
* Investment in adaptive capacity (XI\_04) should be re-evaluated due to its unexpected negative correlation with risk.
* Disaster management agencies should utilize GRU-based risk forecasting models for early warning systems.
* Policymakers can use clustering insights to **allocate disaster relief resources efficiently**.

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