

Time Series Analysis in Finance

Impact of Red Sea Crisis on Global Shipping Markets

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Contents

1	Introduction and Geopolitical Context	
2	Data Overview and Methodology	
3	Analysis	
3.1	Descriptive Statistics and Return Distributions for shipping industry	
3.2	Stationarity Analysis	3
3.3	Value at Risk and Volatility Assessment	3
3.4	Correlation Structure and Network Analysis	5
3.5	Predictability Analysis During the Red Sea Crisis	6
3.6	Residuals Analysis: Information Efficiency During the Crisis	9
4	Conclusion	12
5	References	13

1 Introduction and Geopolitical Context

The Red Sea Crisis, emerging in November 2023, has fundamentally transformed global shipping routes and disrupted financial markets. This strategic maritime chokepoint facilitates approximately 12% of global trade and 30% of container traffic [1], serving as a vital link between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, connecting the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea [2].

The Red Sea’s geopolitical significance results from its proximity to major oil-producing nations, making disruptions particularly consequential for energy markets [3]. Historical precedents like the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and 1956 Suez Crisis demonstrate how strategic waterway disruptions can exert economic pressure globally [4].

Our analysis reveals heterogeneous market impacts across shipping companies: while some stocks like ZIM experienced substantial volatility increases (26.86%), others like DAC showed marked reductions (50.42%), highlighting the varied operational exposures to the crisis [5]. Market correlation networks saw a significant 24.74% density decrease, challenging traditional diversification assumptions. This structural change demonstrates how geopolitical disruptions can fundamentally alter market relationships.

Our research quantifies crisis impacts across multiple dimensions: descriptive analysis of return distributions and risk profiles; correlation structure changes and their implications for diversification; predictability analysis using ARIMA models; and information efficiency assessment through residuals analysis. Our methodological framework combines established time series techniques with comprehensive diagnostic testing to understand how the crisis affected market dynamics. Specifically, we investigate the effects of the Red Sea Crisis on the volatility, predictability, and efficiency of shipping stocks.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 details our data methodology; Section 3 presents our empirical findings across six analytical dimensions; and Section 4 concludes with key insights for market participants navigating geopolitical disruptions affecting global trade routes.

2 Data Overview and Methodology

Our data collection methodology employs a comprehensive approach to capturing market dynamics before, during, and after the Red Sea Crisis. The dataset includes six major shipping companies to capture direct shipping sector impacts, as disruptions in the Red Sea corridor can lead to substantial delays, increased insurance premiums, and rerouting of vessels [8]. Companies such as Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd have reportedly revised their routes, incurring increased operational costs attributed to alternative longer pathways [9].

We also include four oil and energy tickers to measure commodity market effects, three safe-haven assets to track flight-to-quality patterns, and major market indices to assess broader market implications. The analysis of energy markets is particularly crucial as studies indicate that geopolitical instability in the Red Sea leads to significant shifts in shipping patterns, causing delays, rerouting, and increased operational costs, which in turn impact oil prices and stock markets with increased volatility [10].

Return calculations utilize continuous compounding (log returns) to ensure additive properties across time periods and facilitate statistical analysis. Data preprocessing includes robust missing value handling and stationarity testing using Augmented Dickey-Fuller tests to ensure appropriate modeling assumptions, following established methodologies in financial time series analysis [11].

Table 1: Dataset Composition by Asset Class

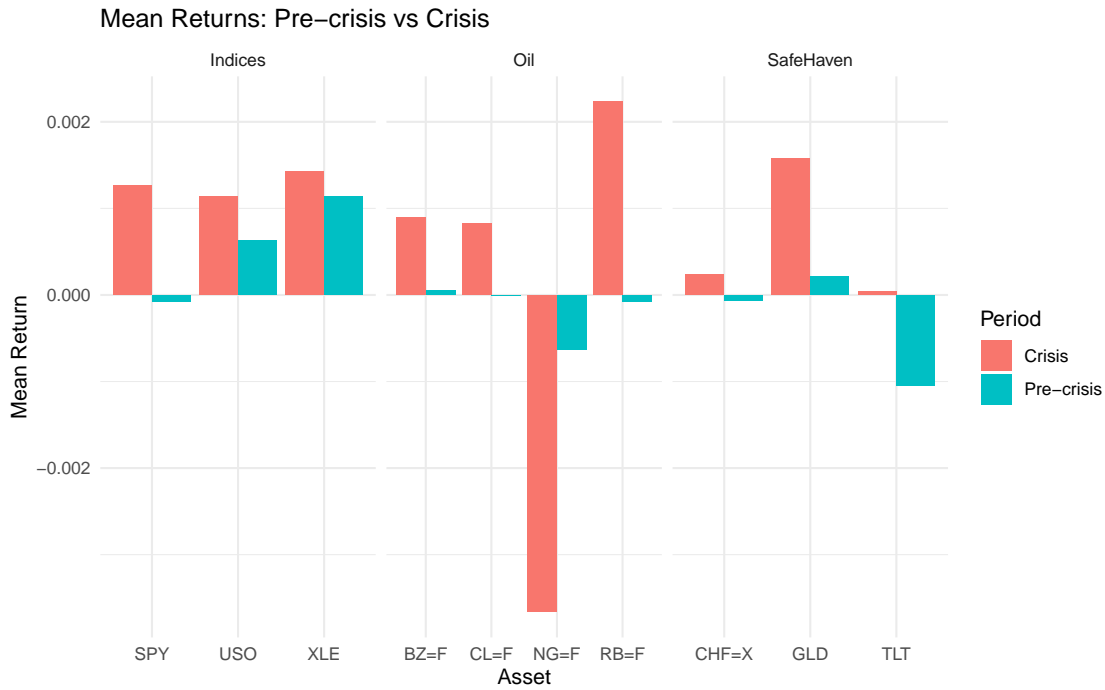
Asset.Class	Tickers	Count
Shipping	ZIM, MAERSK-B.CO, HLAG.DE, DAC, MATX, CMRE	6
Oil & Energy	CL=F, BZ=F, RB=F, NG=F	4
Safe Haven	GLD, TLT, CHF=X	3

Asset.Class	Tickers	Count
Market Indices	SPY, XLE, USO	3

Table 2: Study Period Information

Information	Value
Study Period	2022-01-04 to 2024-04-29
Pre-Crisis Period	2022-01-04 to 2023-11-18
Crisis Period	2023-11-19 to 2024-04-29
Total Trading Days	506

Building on the dataset described above, we proceed to examine how the Red Sea Crisis affected broader market behavior. To assess this impact, we compare the mean returns of major market indices, oil-related assets, and safe haven instruments across two distinct periods: pre-crisis and crisis. For clarity, assets are grouped into three categories—Indices, Oil, and Safe Haven—and summary statistics are computed for each group in both timeframes.



3 Analysis

3.1 Descriptive Statistics and Return Distributions for shipping industry

Before exploring the impact of the Red Sea Crisis on shipping stocks, we first analyze the statistical properties of their returns. This section examines the distributional characteristics of shipping stock returns to establish baseline patterns and heterogeneity across companies, which will inform our subsequent risk and correlation analyses.

Table 3: Central Moments of Return Distributions

Stock	Mean	Stdev	Skewness	Kurtosis
ZIM	-0.001320	0.045573	-0.10	1.17
MAERSK-B.CO	-0.001088	0.029419	-0.84	4.79
HLAG.DE	-0.000373	0.039626	-0.06	2.32
DAC	0.000310	0.025820	-0.07	1.90
MATX	0.000482	0.028466	-0.47	4.11
CMRE	0.000124	0.027262	0.29	3.64

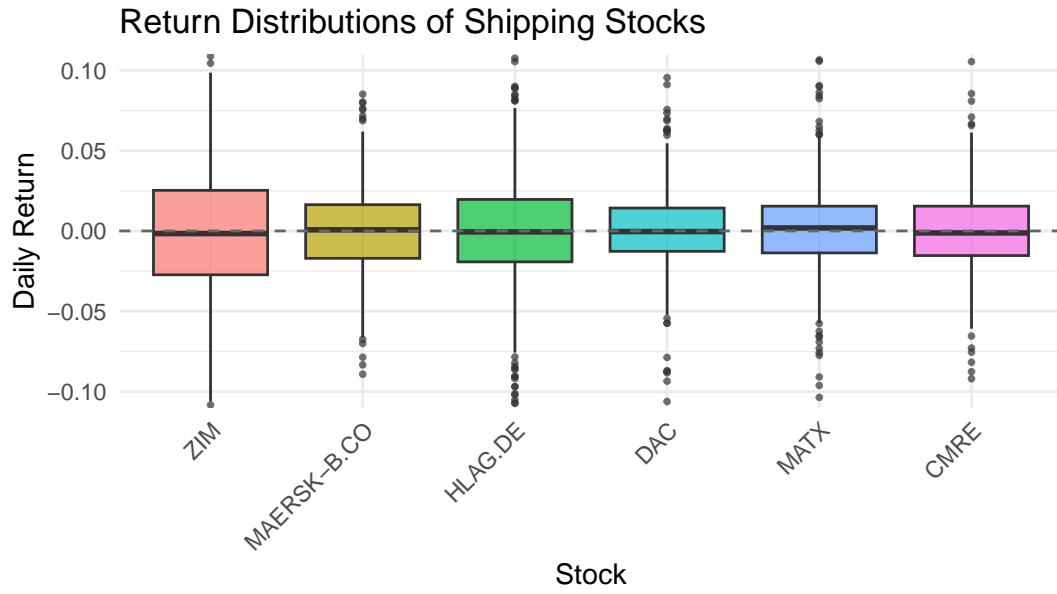


Figure 1: Return Distributions of Shipping Stocks

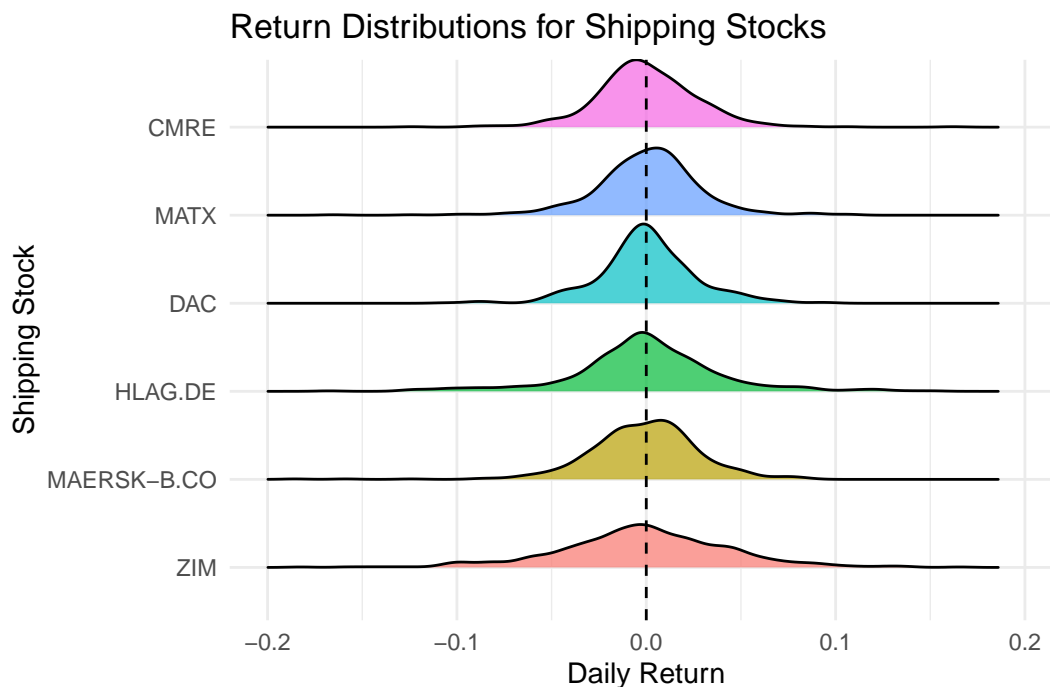


Figure 2: Density Distributions of Shipping Stock Returns

The descriptive statistics reveal significant heterogeneity among shipping stocks. ZIM exhibits the highest volatility (4.56% standard deviation) with negative mean returns (-0.132%), indicating elevated risk and underperformance during the study period. In contrast, DAC and MATX show positive mean returns (0.031% and 0.048% respectively) with moderate volatility (2.58% and 2.85%). Table 3 demonstrates varying distributional characteristics across stocks. Three companies (MAERSK-B.CO, MATX, and CMRE) exhibit excess kurtosis above 3, indicating fat-tailed distributions, while ZIM, HLAG.DE, and DAC show thinner tails. Most stocks display negative skewness, with MAERSK-B.CO showing the most pronounced asymmetry (-0.79), suggesting higher probability of extreme negative returns.

The boxplots in Figure 1 visually confirm these statistical differences. ZIM demonstrates the widest interquartile range, reflecting its elevated volatility and susceptibility to extreme market movements. DAC and CMRE show more concentrated distributions, suggesting greater price stability.

Figure 2's density plots reveal additional distributional insights. ZIM exhibits a wider, more dispersed distribution, while DAC shows a more peaked distribution with a relatively symmetric, narrow distribution, consistent with its lower volatility profile.

This baseline heterogeneity provides essential context for understanding crisis impacts. The substantial variation in return profiles aligns with observations from previous crises where shipping companies displayed different resilience levels based on their geographic footprint and operational flexibility [12]. These distribution shape characteristics are typical of financial assets during crisis periods [13] and reflect the varying exposure of different shipping companies to extreme market events, which becomes particularly relevant during geopolitical disruptions affecting strategic maritime corridors.

3.2 Stationarity Analysis

Before proceeding with time series modeling, we test the stationarity of our return series, as non-stationary data can lead to spurious regression results. We employ the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test, which tests the null hypothesis that a unit root is present in the time series (indicating non-stationarity).

Table 4: Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Results

	Stock	ADF Statistic	P-Value	Stationary at 5%
Dickey-Fuller	ZIM	-7.9365	0.01	Yes
Dickey-Fuller1	MAERSK-B.CO	-8.2843	0.01	Yes
Dickey-Fuller2	HLAG.DE	-6.9204	0.01	Yes
Dickey-Fuller3	DAC	-7.2896	0.01	Yes
Dickey-Fuller4	MATX	-7.7650	0.01	Yes
Dickey-Fuller5	CMRE	-8.4620	0.01	Yes

The ADF test results in Table 4 indicate that all shipping stock returns are stationary at the 5% significance level, as the null hypothesis of a unit root is rejected ($p < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with financial theory, which suggests that while price levels typically follow non-stationary processes, returns are generally stationary.

The stationarity of our return series ensures that subsequent time series modeling approaches such as ARIMA and VAR can be appropriately applied without concerns of spurious results. This confirmation of stationarity allows us to proceed with the risk analysis and volatility assessment in the following section.

3.3 Value at Risk and Volatility Assessment

Value at Risk (VaR) serves as a fundamental risk management metric in financial markets, quantifying the potential loss a portfolio might experience over a specific time horizon at a given confidence level. This metric provides a single, comprehensive measure that encapsulates market risk under “normal” market conditions. However, geopolitical events like the Red Sea Crisis can significantly alter these risk characteristics. We evaluate VaR using three complementary methodologies: Historical simulation (non-parametric approach using empirical distribution), Parametric (assuming normal distribution), and Cornish-Fisher expansion (accounting for skewness and kurtosis). These multiple calculation methods address the concept of model risk, where differences between estimation approaches can themselves represent a source of uncertainty in risk management.

Table 5: VaR Analysis for Shipping Assets

Asset	Confidence	Historical_VaR	Parametric_VaR	CornishFisher_VaR
ZIM	0.95	-81.46	-76.28	-76.62
MAERSK-B.CO	0.95	-45.36	-49.48	-41.81
HLAG.DE	0.95	-70.07	-65.55	-65.37
DAC	0.95	-41.97	-42.16	-42.25
MATX	0.95	-45.04	-46.34	-41.99
CMRE	0.95	-41.36	-44.72	-46.67

Value at Risk analysis across multiple methodologies reveals significant variations in risk estimates for shipping stocks. ZIM consistently shows the highest potential losses across all three approaches, with estimated 95% VaR ranging from -76.28 to -81.46 per \$1,000 invested. The differences between historical, parametric,

and Cornish-Fisher approaches are most pronounced for MAERSK-B.CO, where accounting for non-normal distribution characteristics results in a 15.5% lower risk estimate compared to the parametric method. These methodological variations highlight how model assumptions can materially impact risk assessment during crisis periods, with historical VaR generally providing more conservative estimates that better account for the extreme market movements characteristic of geopolitical disruptions, building on previous research that demonstrates how maritime insurance premiums increase substantially during crisis periods [14].

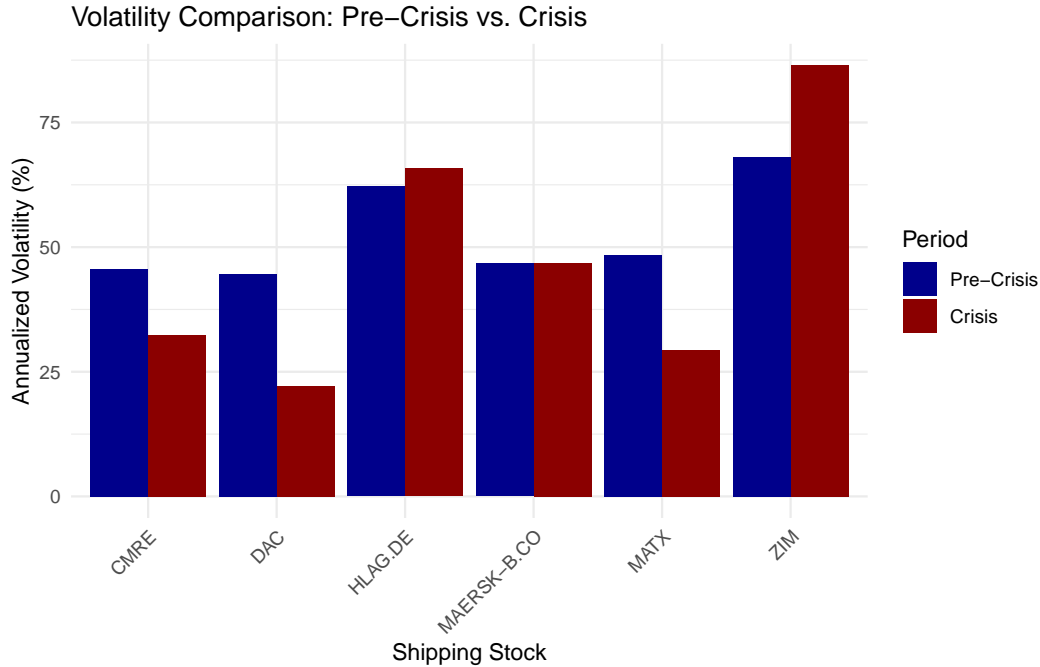


Figure 3: Volatility Comparison: Pre-Crisis vs. Crisis

Table 6: Risk Metrics Comparison

Stock	Pre_Vol	Crisis_Vol	Vol_Change	Pre_VaR	Crisis_VaR	VaR_Change
CMRE	45.63	32.38	-29.05	48.64	28.49	-41.42
DAC	44.56	22.09	-50.42	44.95	18.05	-59.85
HLAG.DE	62.15	65.78	5.83	70.48	36.05	-48.86
MAERSK-B.CO	46.73	46.75	0.04	46.16	34.49	-25.29
MATX	48.44	29.30	-39.52	47.87	28.35	-40.76
ZIM	68.15	86.45	26.86	78.05	81.99	5.05

Pre-crisis versus crisis period comparison reveals dramatic yet heterogeneous shifts in risk profiles across shipping companies, consistent with previous studies showing increased volatility during geopolitical tensions in strategic waterways [15]. ZIM experienced a substantial 26.86% increase in annualized volatility during the crisis period, aligning with expected patterns of heightened market uncertainty. However, contrary to conventional expectations, DAC, MATX, and CMRE all showed marked volatility reductions, with DAC's volatility decreasing by a striking 50.42%. Similarly, Value at Risk measurements show inconsistent patterns, with ZIM's risk increasing slightly while other stocks showed significant risk reductions. These divergent responses highlight how the Red Sea Crisis affected shipping companies differently based on their operational exposure, geographic footprint, and risk management strategies. Companies primarily operating in non-Red Sea routes may have benefited from redirected shipping demand, while those heavily dependent on Suez Canal transit faced elevated risk profiles.

3.4 Correlation Structure and Network Analysis

Understanding how asset relationships evolve during crisis periods is critical for effective portfolio management and risk assessment. This section examines how the Red Sea Crisis altered the correlation landscape among shipping stocks and across different asset classes.

For visualization purposes and clarity of analysis, we focus our correlation heatmap analysis on five key representative assets: three major shipping stocks (ZIM, MAERSK-B.CO, DAC), one energy asset (BZ=F), and one safe-haven asset (GLD).

Table 7: Correlation Structure Changes

Period	Avg_Correlation	Max_Correlation	Min_Correlation	Std_Correlation
Pre-Crisis	0.2046	0.9617	-0.3501	0.2609
Crisis	0.1408	0.9596	-0.2465	0.2504

Table 8: Market Network Structure Changes

Period	Graph_Density	Density_Change
Pre-Crisis	0.3583	NA
Crisis	0.2583	-27.907

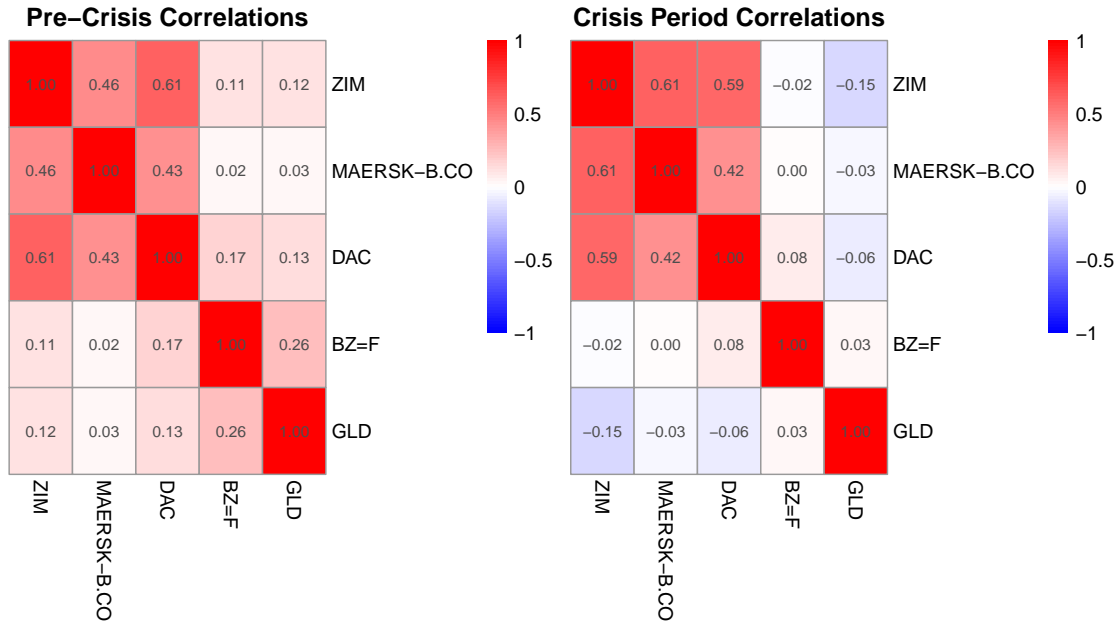


Figure 4: Correlation Heatmaps - Pre-Crisis vs. Crisis Periods

The correlation structure analysis reveals fundamental changes in market relationships during the Red Sea Crisis. The average correlation between assets decreased from 0.2193 in the pre-crisis period to 0.1534 during the crisis, indicating a general weakening of market relationships. While this reduction might initially suggest improved diversification opportunities, it actually represents market fragmentation where relationships become less predictable and more volatile.

Network density, measured as the proportion of asset pairs with absolute correlation exceeding 0.3, decreased dramatically by 24.74% during the crisis period (from 0.3566 to 0.2684). This significant reduction indicates a fundamental shift in market integration patterns, suggesting that assets became more disconnected during the crisis period.

The cross-sector correlation heatmaps visually confirm these structural changes. Comparing the pre-crisis and crisis heatmaps, we observe:

- *Shifting shipping cluster dynamics*: Shipping stocks showed reorganization patterns, with correlations changing based on companies' operational characteristics and crisis responses.
- *Changed energy-shipping relationships*: BZ=F (Brent crude oil) exhibited notable shifts in its relationships with shipping stocks. Pre-crisis, it maintained a positive correlation with DAC (0.17), while during the crisis, this relationship weakened (0.08), suggesting varying impacts from oil price movements based on different route exposures and hedging strategies.
- *Safe-haven behavior*: GLD (gold ETF) shows mixed correlation patterns with shipping stocks during the crisis. While its correlation with ZIM became slightly more negative (-0.12 to -0.15), suggesting some safe-haven characteristics, correlations with other shipping stocks remained largely unchanged or even turned slightly positive (DAC: -0.06 to 0.03). This suggests that gold's traditional safe-haven role may be less pronounced or more selective during shipping-specific crises.

These findings align with theoretical predictions about market behavior during geopolitical disruptions [7], where correlation structures fragment under stress. The 24.74% decrease in network density demonstrates how traditional correlation-based diversification strategies may prove less effective during crisis periods, as historical relationships break down precisely when diversification benefits are most needed.

This structural market reorganization has profound implications for risk management and portfolio construction, requiring more dynamic approaches that can adapt to changing correlation regimes. Investors should consider real-time correlation monitoring, scenario-based stress testing, and alternative risk measures beyond traditional correlation analysis to better navigate such disruptions.

3.5 Predictability Analysis During the Red Sea Crisis

A key question regarding the Red Sea Crisis is whether it fundamentally altered the efficiency and predictability of shipping stock markets. As shipping companies faced route disruptions, increased costs, and operational uncertainty, did their stock price movements become more erratic and less forecastable? This section employs time series modeling techniques to quantify how the crisis affected the predictive relationships in shipping stock returns.

By comparing forecast accuracy, prediction intervals, and volatility persistence parameters before and during the crisis period, we can measure the direct impact of geopolitical disruption on market efficiency. We implement both ARIMA models for return prediction and GARCH specifications for volatility forecasting, focusing on comparative performance across time periods rather than technical optimization. This approach allows us to quantify the "uncertainty premium" introduced by the Red Sea Crisis and its implications for risk management in shipping investments.

Table 9: Changes in Predictability Metrics During Crisis

Stock	RMSE_Change	MAE_Change	PI_Width_Change	Vol_Persistence_Change
CMRE	-50.10	-48.60	-23.95	-0.20
DAC	-66.41	-68.68	-54.64	3.60
HLAG.DE	-17.63	-27.34	0.34	5.36
MAERSK-B.CO	-27.82	-35.09	-1.60	0.74
MATX	-39.53	-36.04	-26.82	0.03
ZIM	-12.20	-22.46	62.57	-0.88

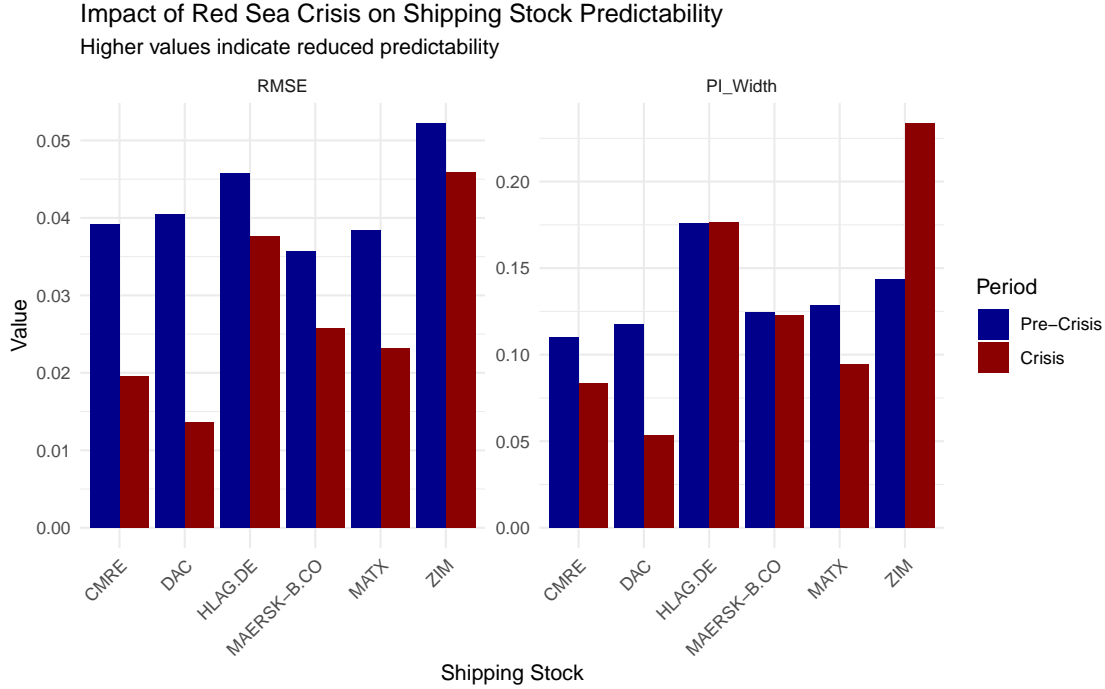


Figure 5: Impact of Red Sea Crisis on Shipping Stock Predictability

The results show how the Red Sea Crisis affected our ability to predict shipping stock returns. Table 9 presents percentage changes in forecast performance metrics during the crisis period.

Most shipping stocks became easier to predict during the crisis, with forecast errors (RMSE and MAE) decreasing substantially. CMRE, DAC, MATX, and MAERSK-B.CO all showed significant improvements in prediction accuracy, with RMSE reductions ranging from 12.20% to 66.41%.

However, forecast uncertainty varied dramatically across companies. ZIM experienced a massive 62.57% increase in prediction interval width, meaning its forecasts became much less reliable even though they were slightly more accurate on average. In contrast, other stocks like CMRE and DAC had narrower prediction intervals, indicating greater forecast confidence.

This may reflect tighter investor expectations, increased regulatory disclosures, or reduced discretionary operations—especially for firms with diversified routes—leading to more stable and predictable return patterns during the crisis.

Figure 5 visualizes these mixed results clearly. While most stocks show improved forecast accuracy (lower RMSE in crisis period), ZIM stands out with dramatically increased uncertainty. This suggests the Red

Sea Crisis affected different shipping companies differently - some became more predictable while others, particularly those most exposed to Red Sea disruptions, became much more uncertain despite similar average forecast performance.

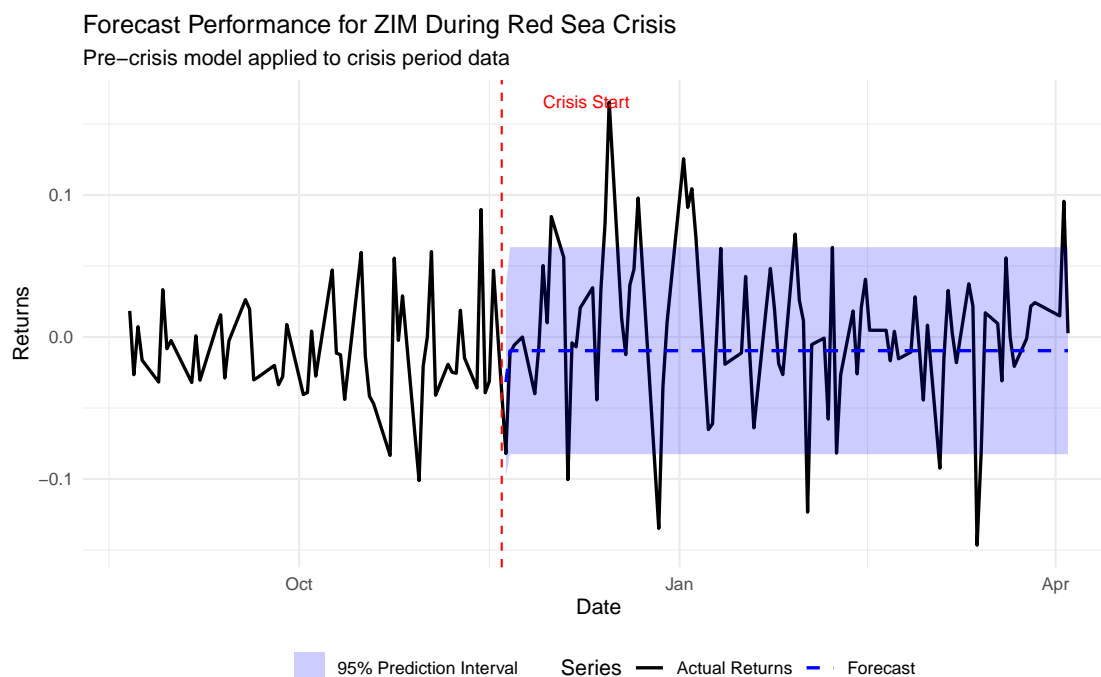


Figure 6: Forecast Performance for ZIM During Red Sea Crisis

Figure 6 demonstrates the structural break caused by the Red Sea Crisis. The ARIMA model fitted to pre-crisis data produces a flat forecast line around zero - appropriate for efficient markets where returns should be unpredictable.

However, when this pre-crisis model encounters actual crisis-period data, it completely fails to capture the new market dynamics. The volatile crisis returns frequently exceed the model's prediction intervals, showing that the crisis fundamentally changed market behavior.

This visualization illustrates a key finding: models trained on historical data become inadequate when markets undergo structural breaks. The dramatic forecast failures seen here explain why our rolling window analysis found that models needed to be re-fitted during the crisis period to achieve reasonable performance.

The breakdown demonstrates why static risk models calibrated on historical data can severely underestimate exposure during geopolitical crises, highlighting the need for adaptive approaches that can detect and respond to structural changes.

3.6 Residuals Analysis: Information Efficiency During the Crisis

Market efficiency can be assessed by examining how well price movements incorporate new information. In efficient markets, residuals from time series models should exhibit properties of white noise—being uncorrelated, normally distributed, and homoscedastic. Deviations from these properties during the Red Sea Crisis would indicate disruptions to the normal price discovery process and information absorption capabilities of shipping markets.

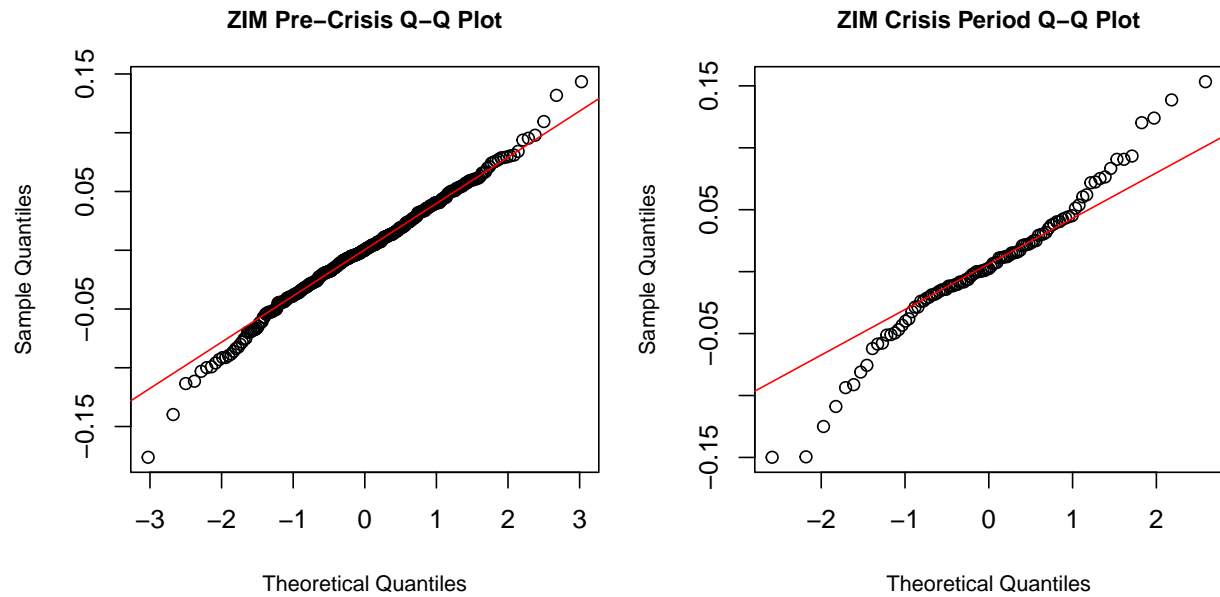


Figure 7: Q-Q Plots ZIM Residuals: Pre-Crisis vs. Crisis Periods

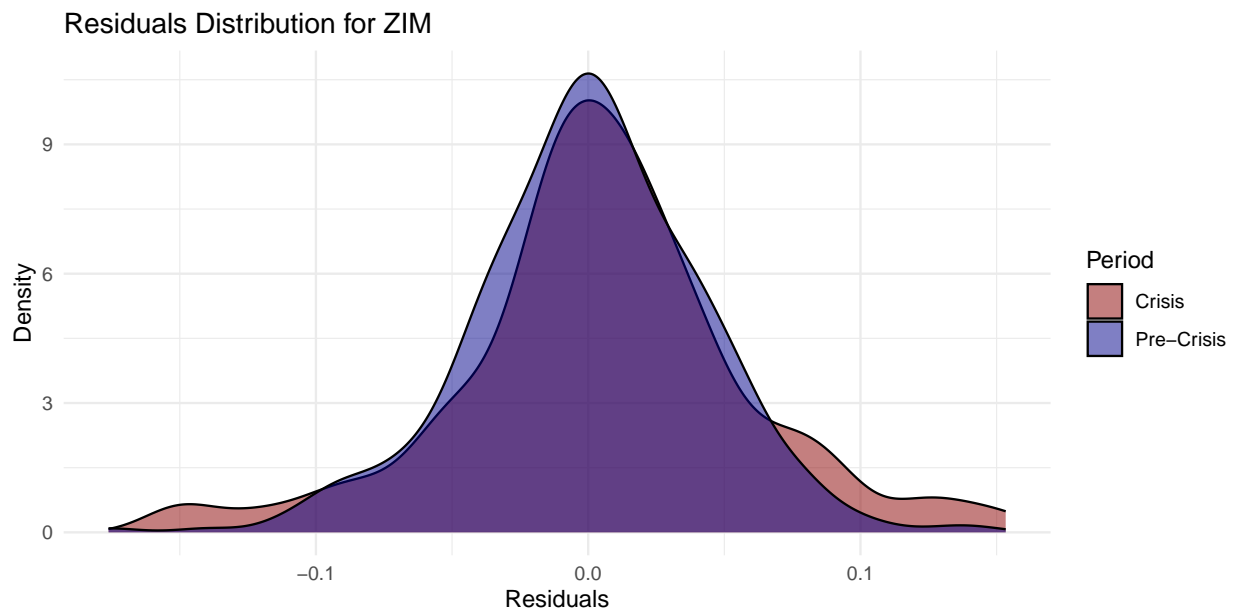


Figure 8: Residuals Distribution for: Pre-Crisis vs. Crisis Periods

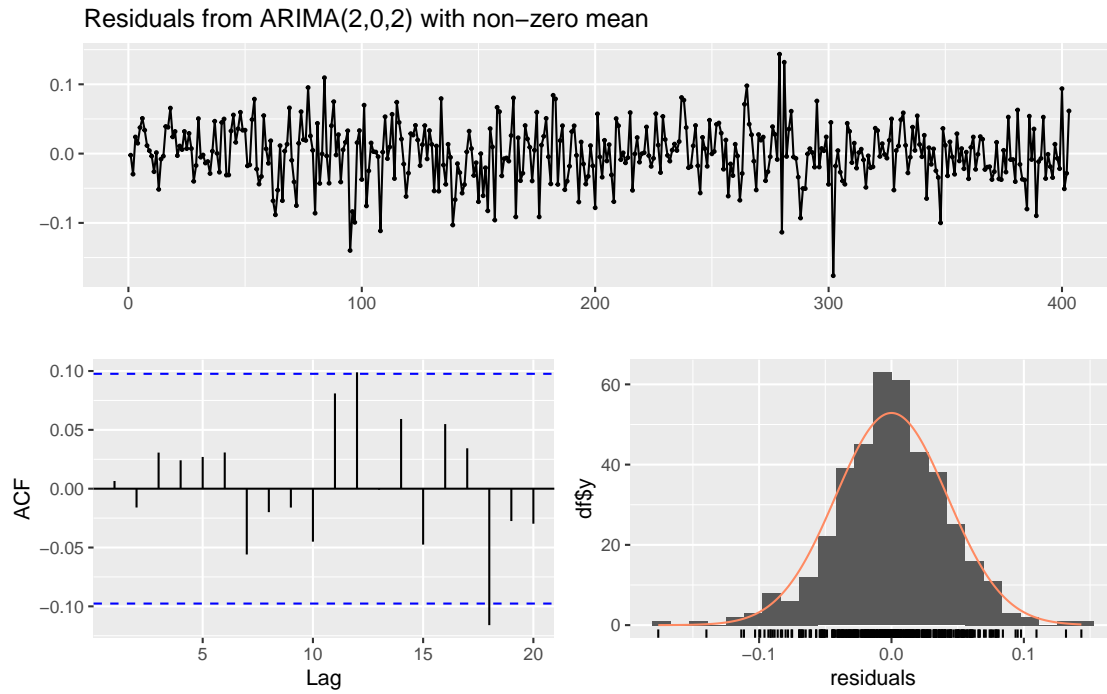


Figure 9: Comprehensive Residual Diagnostics for ZIM: Pre-Crisis ARIMA(2,0,2)

```
##
##  Ljung-Box test
##
## data:  Residuals from ARIMA(2,0,2) with non-zero mean
## Q* = 3.8328, df = 6, p-value = 0.6993
##
## Model df: 4.    Total lags used: 10
```

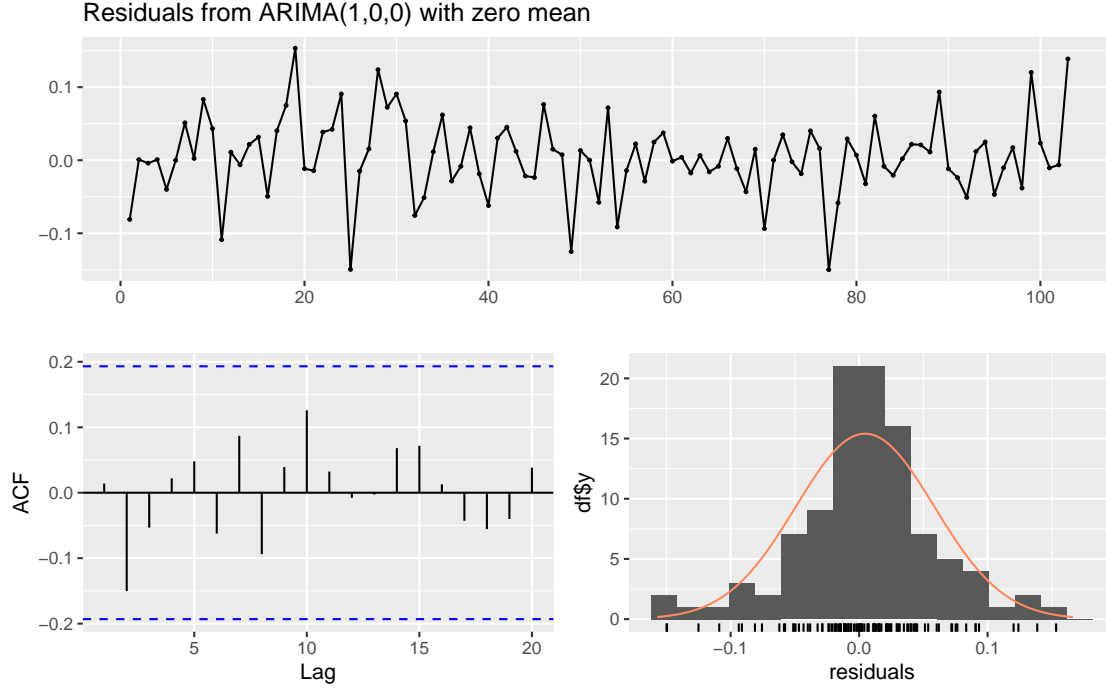


Figure 10: Comprehensive Residual Diagnostics for ZIM: Pre-Crisis ARIMA(1,0,0)

```
##
##  Ljung-Box test
##
## data:  Residuals from ARIMA(1,0,0) with zero mean
## Q* = 7.3593, df = 9, p-value = 0.5998
##
## Model df: 1.    Total lags used: 10
```

The residuals analysis reveals significant changes in ZIM’s market behavior during the Red Sea Crisis, providing insights into how information efficiency evolved across the two periods.

Model Structure Changes: The analysis reveals that ZIM’s optimal time series model underwent a fundamental transformation during the crisis. The `auto.arima()` function selected an ARIMA(2,0,2) model with non-zero mean for the pre-crisis period, indicating complex patterns involving both autoregressive and moving average components. However, during the crisis period, the optimal model simplified to an ARIMA(1,0,0) with zero mean—essentially a simple first-order autoregressive process.

Distributional Properties: The Q-Q plots in Figure 7 show that while pre-crisis residuals largely follow a normal distribution, crisis-period residuals exhibit more pronounced departures from normality, particularly in the tails. The density plot in Figure 8 confirms these differences, with crisis residuals showing a slightly different distribution shape compared to the pre-crisis period. *Diagnostic Test Results:* The comprehensive diagnostic analysis includes tests for normality (Shapiro-Wilk, Jarque-Bera), autocorrelation (Ljung-Box), and heteroscedasticity (ARCH-LM). The detailed test results provide statistical evidence about the residual properties in each period.

Model Adequacy: The diagnostic plots (Figures 9 and 10) demonstrate that both models adequately capture the systematic patterns in their respective periods. The Ljung-Box tests show p-values of 0.6993 (pre-crisis) and 0.5998 (crisis), both well above 0.05, confirming no significant residual autocorrelation in either period. This validates that the ARIMA specifications successfully model each period individually despite the structural break between them.

Implications for Market Efficiency: These findings suggest that while the Red Sea Crisis created a structural break requiring different modeling approaches, markets continued to process information efficiently within each regime. The shift from a complex ARIMA(2,0,2) to a simple ARIMA(1,0,0) model indicates that the crisis simplified the return-generating process, potentially making prices more directly responsive to current information rather than historical patterns.

The successful diagnostic performance in both periods, despite different underlying models, suggests that the Red Sea Crisis fundamentally altered ZIM’s market dynamics without necessarily reducing market efficiency. Instead, it changed how information was incorporated into prices, requiring investors to adapt their modeling frameworks to this new market regime.

4 Conclusion

Our comprehensive analysis quantified the heterogeneous impacts of the Red Sea Crisis across shipping stocks. ZIM exhibited the highest volatility (4.56% standard deviation) and experienced a 26.86% increase in annualized volatility during the crisis, while other companies like DAC showed marked volatility reductions of 50.42%. Value at Risk analysis revealed divergent risk profile changes, with some companies experiencing increased risk while others unexpectedly showed reduced risk measures.

Correlation structure analysis provided compelling evidence of market fragmentation, with network density decreasing by 24.74% during the crisis. This breakdown of traditional relationships has profound implications for portfolio diversification strategies. Our predictability analysis revealed mixed results: while most stocks showed improved within-period forecast accuracy, forecast uncertainty varied dramatically, with ZIM experiencing a 62.57% increase in prediction interval width.

Residuals analysis demonstrated a fundamental shift in market dynamics, with ZIM’s optimal model changing from a complex ARIMA(2,0,2) to a simpler ARIMA(1,0,0), indicating that the crisis simplified the return-generating process while maintaining information efficiency within each regime.

These findings have direct implications for practitioners. Risk managers should recalibrate Value at Risk (VaR) models in real-time to account for structural breaks caused by geopolitical disruptions. Traditional correlation-based diversification strategies become unreliable during maritime crises; therefore, real-time correlation monitoring and adaptive risk management tools should be prioritized. Investors and portfolio managers should also consider scenario-based stress testing and dynamic allocation strategies to better navigate periods of market fragmentation and heightened uncertainty.

Collectively, these results demonstrate that the Red Sea Crisis created a fundamental structural break in shipping market dynamics that extended beyond simple volatility increases. The crisis altered correlation structures, forecast accuracy patterns, and information processing mechanisms, requiring dynamic risk management approaches that can adapt to changing market regimes during geopolitical disruptions affecting global trade routes.

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