International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management (IJSREM)
Volume: 08 Issue: 08 | Aug - 2024 SJIF Rating: 8.448 ISSN: 2582-3930

Thunderstorm Nowcasting in India: A Survey

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Abstract
Thunderstorm is a major threat to life. In India it is a major disaster which causes loss of life and property every year. It is a meteorological phenomenon occurs in different parts of India which includes heavy rainfall, strong wind, hailstorm, dust storm or lightning. The earlier prediction of thunderstorms is crucial for public safety and awareness. Thunderstorm prediction is essential for public safety that's why precision and accuracy in predicting thunderstorms is very important. Thunderstorm is a phenomenon which occurs due to formation of convection cells and the lifetime of one convection cell is less than an hour so nowcasting or short term forecasting is recommended for thunderstorms in which the model predicts the initiation, development and direction of thunderstorms sub-hourly. Indian Meteorological department uses satellites that are INSAT-3DR (74°E), INSAT-3D (84°E) & Kalpana-1 (72.4°E) operationally for forecasting. Approximately 200 Agro-Automated Weather Station (Agro- AWS), 806 Automatic weather stations, 1382 Automatic Rain gauges, 83 lightning sensors along with 63 Pilot balloon upper air observation stations serve as the backbone of weather observation services of IMD throughout the country. In addition IMD has 39 Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs) well distributed across the country to monitor severe weather events. Due to advancement in technology, the thunderstorm nowcasting techniques also evolved. Now a days , radar based techniques like TITAN (*Thunderstorm Identification, Tracking and Nowcasting*), satellite based techniques, Numerical weather prediction, machine learning and deep learning techniques play a vital role in nowcasting. The study also discuss about the challenges faced by meteorologists during thunderstorm nowcasting.

Key Words: Thunderstorm, Weather Prediction, Nowcasting

1. Introduction

Thunder, lightning, and often a lot of rain are the atmospheric phenomena that constitute thunderstorms. India Meteorological Department defines a thunderstorm as a meteorological phenomenon in which one or more sudden electrical discharges manifested by a flash of light (Lightning) and a sharp rumbling sound (thunder) occurs from a cloud of vertical development. (Roy et al., 2019). Thunderstorms are developed by convective weather where warm air rise in atmosphere gets cold and water vapors are formed . This makes a loop which is called convection cell. When thunderstorms get severe, they can also be a risk to property and human safety. This includes incidents like May 14 2024, a billboard the size of an Olympic swimming pool fell on people during a thunderstorm, resulting in at least 14 deaths and 75 injuries. In September 2023, there were at least 12 confirmed deaths and 14 reported injuries as a result of strong thunderstorms and lightning activity in Odisha. As per National disaster Management of India,"Llightning strikes were responsible for approximately 39% of all deaths resulting from natural disasters between 1967 and 2012 India suffered 2,833, 2582, and 2,641 deaths from lightning in 2013, 2014, and 2015, respectively. Many regions of India were struck by strong dust storms, thunderstorms, and lightning in May 2018, which led to many deaths and injuries in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand, and Punjab." Short-term forecasting methods called "thunderstorm nowcasting" are used to produce accurate, timely forecasts of the development, movement, and intensity of thunderstorms. The accuracy and precision of thunderstorm nowcasting depends upon many factors including techniques being used for thunderstorm nowcasting, data resources available and the selection of data (radar data , satellite data , weather observatories etc) for forecasting. By enhancing warnings and readiness for extreme weather occurrences, these strategies hope to lessen the effects on communities. For weather-sensitive industries like aircraft, outdoor events, and emergency management, short range forecasting is essential. Meteorologists face several challenges in thunderstorm nowcasting like High Spatial and Temporal Variability, Data Limitations, Atmospheric Conditions etc.

2. Thunderstorm Nowcasting Techniques:

2.1 Radar-Oriented Methods:

Radar-based techniques in India play a crucial role in monitoring and forecasting weather phenomena, particularly for severe events like thunderstorms and heavy rainfall. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) operates a network of Doppler weather radars that provide real-time data on precipitation, wind velocity, and storm structure. These radars are capable of detecting small-scale weather features and tracking their movement, which is essential for accurate nowcasting. Research by Kulkarni et al. (2015) highlights the application of Doppler radar data in identifying the vertical structure of storms and improving rainfall forecasts. Additionally, studies by Dhanesh Kumar et al. (2017) demonstrate how radar data can be integrated with satellite imagery and numerical weather prediction models to enhance the accuracy of severe weather forecasts. The use of radar-based techniques has significantly improved the lead time for warnings issued to the public, contributing to better disaster preparedness and response strategies in India.

2.2 Satellite-Based Methods:

In India, satellite-based techniques for thunderstorm nowcasting are critical for enhancing weather prediction and mitigating the impacts of severe weather events. INSAT-3D and INSAT-3DR, operated by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), provide high-resolution imagery and rapid scanning capabilities, capturing data every 15 minutes. These satellites are equipped with advanced sensors to monitor cloud formation, temperature, and humidity. Techniques such as cloud-top cooling rate analysis, which detects rapid cooling of cloud tops indicative of thunderstorm development, and Convective Available Potential Energy (CAPE) estimation, which assesses the atmosphere's potential to produce severe storms, are extensively used. Research by Basha et al. (2020) highlights the integration of these satellite observations with numerical weather prediction models and ground-based radar data to enhance the accuracy of nowcasting. Additionally, the Megha-Tropiques satellite, a joint mission between ISRO and the French space agency CNES, contributes valuable data on tropical weather systems, further improving thunderstorm prediction capabilities in India.

2.3 Models for Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP):

Numerical weather prediction (NWP) techniques in India are pivotal for forecasting and mitigating the impacts of severe weather, including thunderstorms. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) utilizes high-resolution models such as the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model and the Global Forecast System (GFS). These models assimilate a wide range of observational data from satellites, radars, and surface stations to initialize and update their forecasts. The data assimilation process, which incorporates real-time observations into model simulations, significantly enhances forecast accuracy. Studies by Rajeevan et al. (2012) have demonstrated the effectiveness of these models in predicting extreme weather events, with improved resolution capturing finer-scale weather phenomena. Furthermore, advances in ensemble forecasting, which runs multiple simulations to account for uncertainties, have been crucial in improving the reliability of weather forecasts. Research indicates that integrating satellite data with NWP models enhances their capability to predict convective activities and provide timely warnings for severe weather events.

2.4 Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence

Machine learning techniques are increasingly being utilized in India for various applications, including weather prediction, healthcare, agriculture, and finance. In weather prediction, machine learning models such as artificial neural networks (ANNs) and support vector machines (SVMs) are used to enhance the accuracy of forecasts by analyzing complex patterns in historical weather data. For instance, studies by Ramachandran et al. (2018) demonstrate the application of deep learning models in predicting monsoon rainfall with greater precision compared to traditional methods. In healthcare, machine learning algorithms are employed for disease diagnosis and treatment planning, as shown by Rajkomar et al. (2019), who developed predictive models for patient outcomes using electronic health records. Agriculture benefits from machine learning through precision farming techniques, which optimize crop yields and resource usage. In the financial sector, machine learning is applied to credit scoring, fraud detection, and algorithmic trading, enhancing decision-making processes and operational efficiency.

2.5 Lightning Detection Networks:

Lightning detection network-based techniques in India are vital for real-time monitoring and forecasting of thunderstorms, enhancing safety and preparedness. The Indian Lightning Detection Network (ILDN) and similar systems employ ground-based sensors to detect and locate lightning strikes with high accuracy. These sensors, spread across the country, detect electromagnetic pulses emitted by lightning and triangulate their position. Studies by Nair et al. (2014) have demonstrated the effectiveness of these networks in providing real-time data on lightning activity, which is crucial for nowcasting severe weather events. The integration of lightning data with weather prediction models helps in improving the accuracy of thunderstorm forecasts. Additionally, the data from lightning detection networks support aviation safety, disaster management, and the protection of critical infrastructure. The combination of lightning detection with satellite observations and radar data creates a comprehensive approach to monitoring and predicting thunderstorms in India.

2.6 Integrated Approaches:

Integrated approaches based techniques in India focus on combining multiple data sources and methodologies to enhance the accuracy and reliability of weather forecasting and disaster management. These techniques often involve the integration of satellite data, ground-based observations, and numerical weather prediction models. For instance, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) employs an integrated system that combines satellite imagery, Doppler radar data, and numerical models to provide comprehensive forecasts for severe weather events, including thunderstorms and cyclones (Dhar et al., 2016). Research by Raghavan et al. (2018) highlights the effectiveness of such integrated approaches in improving the prediction of monsoon rainfall and the associated risks of flooding. Furthermore, the integration of lightning detection networks with meteorological data enhances the understanding of convective storm development, allowing for better nowcasting and warning systems (Nair et al., 2014). Overall, these integrated techniques are crucial for enhancing early warning systems, improving public safety, and facilitating effective disaster response in India.

2.7 Human Expertise:

Human expertise-based techniques in India play a vital role in weather forecasting and disaster management, particularly in interpreting complex meteorological data and making informed decisions during severe weather events. Meteorologists and climate scientists apply their extensive knowledge and experience to analyze weather patterns, assess risks, and provide timely forecasts. For example, during the Indian monsoon season, experts utilize traditional forecasting methods, local knowledge, and modern technology to improve predictions of rainfall and potential flooding (Sinha et al., 2017). Collaborative efforts between scientists and local communities, as highlighted by Krishnan et al. (2019), enhance the effectiveness of early warning systems by incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices into modern forecasting techniques. Additionally, the expertise of professionals in areas such as agriculture and disaster management helps tailor responses to specific regional needs, ensuring that warnings and advisories are relevant and actionable. These human expertise-based techniques complement technological advancements, leading to more robust and resilient approaches to weather forecasting and disaster preparedness in India.

3. Data sources for thunderstorm nowcasting in Indian region:

In order to offer precise and timely forecasts, thunderstorm nowcasting in India combines ancient approaches with modern technologies. The primary data sources and technologies utilized for thunderstorm nowcasting in India are as follows:

3.1 RADAR DATA:

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) operates a network of Doppler weather radars that provide high-resolution, real-time information on precipitation, wind patterns, and storm dynamics. These radars can detect fine-scale features and track the movement of weather systems, allowing for timely updates on developing conditions. Research by Dhanesh Kumar et al. (2017) highlights the integration of radar data with satellite observations and numerical weather prediction models to enhance the accuracy of rainfall forecasts and improve lead times for public warnings. Additionally, studies by Mukhopadhyay et al. (2020) emphasize the value of radar-derived products, such as reflectivity and radial velocity, in identifying convective storm structures and predicting severe weather events. Overall, radar data significantly contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of nowcasting systems in India, facilitating better preparedness and response to adverse weather conditions.

3.2 Satellite Data:

Satellite data in India plays a critical role in nowcasting weather events by providing real-time observations and enhancing the accuracy of short-term forecasts. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) operates a series of geostationary satellites, such as the INSAT and GSAT series, which capture high-resolution imagery of cloud cover, temperature profiles, and moisture content. These satellites are equipped with advanced multispectral sensors that enable the monitoring of convective cloud development and storm tracking. Research by Basha et al. (2020) highlights the effectiveness of using satellite data for cloud-top cooling rate analysis, which is instrumental in identifying rapidly developing thunderstorms. Furthermore, the integration of satellite data with ground-based observations and numerical weather prediction models significantly improves the quality of nowcasting. Studies by Mohanty et al. (2019) emphasize that combining satellite and radar data enhances the lead time for severe weather warnings, ultimately contributing to better public safety and disaster preparedness in India.

3.3 SURFACE OBSERVATORIES:

Surface observatories data in India is a fundamental component of nowcasting systems, providing critical real-time information on meteorological parameters such as temperature, humidity, wind speed, and atmospheric pressure. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) operates a network of surface observatories across the country, which collect data at regular intervals and contribute to the understanding of local weather conditions. Research by Choudhury et al. (2015) highlights the importance of surface data in calibrating and validating numerical weather prediction models, thereby enhancing the accuracy of short-term forecasts. Additionally, surface observations are crucial for monitoring the development of convective systems, as they help identify conditions conducive to thunderstorm formation. Studies by Mohanty et al. (2018) indicate that integrating surface observatory data with satellite and radar information significantly improves the lead time and reliability of weather warnings, ultimately supporting disaster management efforts in India. The comprehensive data collected from these observatories aids in generating timely and accurate nowcasts, which are essential for public safety and agricultural planning.

3.4 Upper Air Observations:

Upper air observatories data in India is essential for enhancing the accuracy of nowcasting and short-term weather forecasting by providing critical information about the atmospheric conditions at various altitudes. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) operates a network of upper air observatories that utilize radiosondes and wind profilers to measure temperature, humidity, pressure, and wind direction and speed at different atmospheric levels. These observations help in understanding the vertical structure of the atmosphere, which is crucial for identifying convective instability and the potential for thunderstorm development. Research by Kumar et al. (2017) emphasizes the significance of upper air data in improving the initialization of numerical weather prediction models, thereby enhancing the precision of short-term forecasts. Furthermore, studies by Mohanty et al. (2019) demonstrate that integrating upper air data with satellite and radar observations significantly improves the predictive capability for severe weather events. This comprehensive approach supports effective nowcasting and timely weather warnings, contributing to disaster management and public safety efforts in India.

3.5 Lightning Detection Network:

Lightning detection network data in India is crucial for nowcasting severe weather events, particularly thunderstorms, by providing real-time information on lightning strikes and associated storm activity. The Indian Lightning Detection Network (ILDN) consists of multiple ground-based sensors that detect and locate lightning strikes with high precision. These sensors capture the electromagnetic pulses emitted during lightning discharges, allowing meteorologists to track storm intensity and movement. Research by Nair et al. (2014) demonstrates the effectiveness of the ILDN in providing timely data that can be integrated with other meteorological observations for enhanced nowcasting capabilities. Additionally, studies by Kumar and Kamra (2012) highlight the role of lightning detection data in improving the prediction of severe convective storms, thus facilitating timely warnings and reducing risks to life and property. The integration of lightning data with satellite and radar observations further enhances the overall predictive capability, supporting disaster management and public safety initiatives in India.

3.6 Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) Model Data:

Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) model data in India is integral to improving the accuracy of weather forecasting and nowcasting, particularly for short-term predictions of severe weather events. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) utilizes high-resolution regional models such as the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model and the Global Forecast System (GFS) to generate forecasts. These models assimilate a wide array of observational data, including satellite imagery, radar observations, and surface measurements, to simulate atmospheric conditions and predict weather patterns. Research by Rajeevan et al. (2012) highlights the importance of NWP models in providing timely and reliable forecasts of extreme weather events, particularly during the monsoon season. Additionally, studies by Dutta et al. (2019) emphasize the enhancement of forecast accuracy through the integration of NWP outputs with real-time observations, which helps in detecting convective systems and issuing timely warnings. The utilization of NWP model data significantly contributes to effective disaster management and public safety initiatives in India by providing critical insights into potential severe weather events.

3.7 Instruments for Remote Sensing:

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) operates several remote sensing satellites equipped with advanced sensors that capture data on various meteorological parameters. For instance, the INSAT series of geostationary satellites and the IRS series of polar-orbiting satellites provide real-time imagery of cloud cover, temperature, humidity, and precipitation patterns. Research by Mohanty et al. (2018) emphasizes the role of satellite-based remote sensing in detecting cloud microphysical properties, which are essential for understanding storm dynamics and predicting severe weather. Additionally, studies by Basha et al. (2020) highlight how integrating remote sensing data with ground-based observations and numerical weather prediction models enhances the accuracy of short-term forecasts and improves lead times for severe weather warnings. These remote sensing instruments significantly contribute to effective disaster management and public safety efforts in India by providing timely and accurate information for nowcasting.

3.8 Crowd sourced Data:

Crowd-sourced data in India is increasingly being recognized as a valuable resource for enhancing weather nowcasting capabilities. This data is collected from various platforms, including social media, mobile applications, and community reports, providing real-time information on local weather conditions, such as rainfall, temperature, and severe weather events. The integration of crowd-sourced data with traditional meteorological data can significantly improve the spatial and temporal resolution of weather forecasts. Research by Prabha et al. (2020) demonstrates that crowd-sourced weather reports can complement official observations, helping to fill data gaps in rural and remote areas where conventional weather stations are sparse. Additionally, studies by Ranjan et al. (2021) highlight the potential of using machine learning algorithms to analyze crowd-sourced data for identifying patterns and improving the accuracy of short-term forecasts. By leveraging this grassroots information, meteorological agencies can enhance their nowcasting efforts, leading to more timely and localized weather warnings, ultimately benefiting disaster management and public safety initiatives in India.

3.9 Integrated Sensor Networks:

Integrated sensor network data in India is pivotal for enhancing nowcasting capabilities, offering comprehensive and real-time monitoring of weather conditions by combining data from various types of sensors. These networks integrate ground-based sensors, such as automatic weather stations (AWS), Doppler weather radars, and lightning detection systems, with satellite observations to provide a holistic view of the atmospheric state. The synergy of these diverse data sources improves the accuracy and lead time of short-term weather forecasts. Research by Kumar et al. (2017) highlights the effectiveness of integrated sensor networks in improving rainfall predictions and monitoring severe weather events. The IMD has been utilizing these integrated networks to enhance its nowcasting services, providing timely warnings and reducing the impact of natural disasters. Studies by Ramesh et al. (2019) emphasize that the fusion of sensor data with numerical weather prediction models leads to significant advancements in predicting convective storms and heavy precipitation events. The comprehensive coverage and high temporal resolution of integrated sensor networks thus play a crucial role in disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts across India.

3.10 Human Observations:

Human observations data in India remains a valuable resource for nowcasting, offering ground truth validation and complementing automated and remote sensing systems. This type of data, collected through trained weather observers and citizen reports, includes detailed observations of weather conditions such as cloud cover, visibility, precipitation, and storm development. These observations are especially critical in regions with limited technological infrastructure. Research by Singh et al. (2018) emphasizes the importance of human observations in enhancing the accuracy of weather predictions, particularly in remote and rural areas where automated weather stations may be sparse or nonexistent. Additionally, Mohapatra et al. (2019) highlight that integrating human observation data with other meteorological data sources, such as radar and satellite, significantly improves nowcasting capabilities for severe weather events, including thunderstorms and heavy rainfall. The real-time input from human observers allows for rapid updates and adjustments to forecasts, thereby enhancing disaster preparedness and public safety measures in India.

4. Challenges

4.1 Rapid development

Rapid development of thunderstorms poses significant challenges for nowcasting in India due to the complex and dynamic nature of atmospheric processes involved. The quick onset of convective activity can lead to severe weather events, such as heavy rainfall, hail, and strong winds, which require timely and accurate predictions to minimize impacts on life and property. Research by Mahesh et al. (2019) indicates that the swift evolution of thunderstorm systems often outpaces the capabilities of traditional forecasting methods, which rely on data that may not capture rapid changes in atmospheric conditions. Moreover, the spatial variability of thunderstorms, influenced by local topography and land-use patterns, complicates the ability to provide precise forecasts at a granular level (Guhathakurta et al., 2017). The challenges are exacerbated by limitations in observational networks, particularly in remote areas, where data scarcity can hinder the timely detection of developing storms. To address these challenges, the integration of advanced technologies, such as high-resolution numerical weather prediction models and real-time data from satellite and radar systems, is essential for improving nowcasting capabilities in India (Kumar et al., 2020). Enhanced collaboration between meteorological agencies and local communities is also critical for effective communication of severe weather warnings

4.2 High spatial and temporal variability

High spatial and temporal variability presents a significant challenge for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, complicating the prediction of localized severe weather events. Thunderstorms often develop rapidly and exhibit irregular patterns influenced by a multitude of factors, including topography, land use, and atmospheric instability (Rao et al., 2018). This variability can lead to significant differences in rainfall intensity and storm duration over short distances, making it difficult for meteorologists to issue accurate and timely warnings. Research by Dutta et al. (2021) highlights that traditional forecasting models, which typically rely on gridded data, may not adequately capture the fine-scale features of thunderstorms, resulting in underestimations or overestimations of storm impacts in certain areas. Additionally, the limitations of observational networks, particularly in rural and remote regions, further exacerbate the challenge, as sparse data can hinder the detection of rapidly evolving storm systems (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2017). To improve nowcasting capabilities, integrating high-resolution satellite data, Doppler radar observations, and machine learning techniques is essential for better capturing the spatial and temporal dynamics of thunderstorms in India.

4.3 Data limitations

Data limitations pose a significant challenge for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, impacting the accuracy and timeliness of weather predictions. The sparsity of observational networks, particularly in rural and remote regions, results in inadequate coverage of real-time meteorological data, which is essential for detecting and monitoring rapidly developing thunderstorms. Research by Mahesh et al. (2019) indicates that the limited number of ground-based weather stations and the uneven distribution of Doppler radar systems hinder the ability to capture the fine-scale variations in atmospheric conditions that lead to thunderstorm formation. Moreover, the reliance on older observational technologies can result in data gaps and delays in data transmission, further complicating nowcasting efforts (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2017). In addition, while satellite data provides valuable information, its resolution may not be sufficient to identify localized storm activity, leading to potential underestimations or mischaracterizations of storm intensity (Kumar et al., 2020). Addressing these data limitations through the expansion of observational networks and the integration of advanced technologies, such as crowd-sourced data and machine learning techniques, is crucial for improving nowcasting capabilities and ensuring timely weather warnings.

4.4 Model limitations

Model limitations present a significant challenge for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, impacting the accuracy and reliability of short-term weather forecasts. Many numerical weather prediction (NWP) models are designed with a coarser resolution that may not adequately represent the fine-scale processes involved in thunderstorm development, leading to inaccuracies in predicting storm intensity, location, and timing (Dutta et al., 2021). Research by Rajeevan et al. (2016) indicates that existing models often struggle to capture the rapid and dynamic nature of convective systems due to their inherent assumptions and simplifications, which can result in missed or poorly represented thunderstorms. Additionally, the parameterization schemes used in these models may not accurately reflect the local atmospheric conditions specific to the Indian subcontinent, where geographical diversity and unique climatic influences are prominent (Kumar et al., 2019). Furthermore, the initialization of models relies heavily on available observational data, and gaps or biases in this data can propagate through the model, exacerbating forecast errors. To overcome these model limitations, there is a need for ongoing improvements in model resolution, the development of region-specific parameterization schemes, and better integration of real-time observational data.

4.5 Atmospheric conditions

Atmospheric conditions in India pose significant challenges for thunderstorm nowcasting due to the complex interplay of various meteorological factors that influence thunderstorm development and behavior. The Indian subcontinent experiences diverse climatic zones, which contribute to varying atmospheric stability, moisture content, and wind shear conditions that are critical for thunderstorm formation (Kumar et al., 2020). The presence of high humidity and temperature, particularly during the monsoon season, creates favorable conditions for convection but also leads to rapid storm intensification, making timely predictions difficult (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2017). Additionally, local topographical features, such as the Himalayas and the Western Ghats, can significantly affect airflow patterns, leading to the formation of microclimates and localized weather phenomena that traditional forecasting models may struggle to capture (Mahesh et al., 2019). The unpredictability of these atmospheric conditions, coupled with the rapid development of convective storms, complicates the task of meteorologists in issuing accurate and timely warnings for severe weather events, underscoring the need for advanced observational techniques and improved modeling approaches in Indian meteorology.

Human factors present notable challenges for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, affecting both the accuracy of forecasts and the effectiveness of communication strategies. One significant issue is the variability in public awareness and understanding of meteorological phenomena, which can lead to differing responses to severe weather warnings (Sharma et al., 2021). In many rural areas, communities may lack access to timely and reliable information about approaching thunderstorms, which can result in inadequate preparedness and increased vulnerability to storm impacts (Ranjan et al., 2020). Additionally, the limitations in meteorological training and resources among local officials can hinder the dissemination of critical information, making it difficult to communicate risks effectively (Mahesh et al., 2019). Furthermore, cultural factors and local beliefs can influence how weather warnings are perceived and acted upon, sometimes leading to skepticism or delayed responses to alerts (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2017). To enhance nowcasting efforts, it is essential to implement comprehensive public education programs and improve communication channels between meteorological agencies and communities, ensuring that warnings are understood and acted upon promptly.

4.6. Terrain effects

Terrain effects pose significant challenges for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, as the diverse topography of the region influences local weather patterns and the development of convective systems. The presence of mountains, valleys, and plateaus can modify airflow, leading to localized convergence zones that enhance thunderstorm activity in specific areas while leaving nearby regions relatively unaffected (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2017). For instance, the Western Ghats and the Himalayas can create orographic lifting, which promotes the rapid development of thunderstorms in their vicinity, often resulting in intense rainfall and severe weather events (Kumar et al., 2019). Additionally, the complexity of the terrain can hinder the effectiveness of traditional forecasting models that operate on coarser grids, limiting their ability to capture fine-scale variations in atmospheric conditions (Dutta et al., 2021). The interplay between urban areas and natural landscapes also complicates nowcasting efforts, as urban heat islands can enhance local instability and trigger thunderstorms, further complicating predictions. To improve nowcasting capabilities in such diverse terrain, it is essential to utilize high-resolution models and integrate real-time observational data from radar and ground stations that account for these terrain-induced effects.

4.7 Multi-scale interactions

Multi-scale interactions present a significant challenge for thunderstorm nowcasting in India, as the development and evolution of thunderstorms are influenced by a complex interplay of processes occurring at various spatial and temporal scales. Thunderstorms can be affected by synoptic-scale weather systems, such as monsoonal flows and tropical cyclones, while simultaneously responding to mesoscale features like land-sea breezes and local thermal effects (Mahesh et al., 2019). This complexity complicates the prediction of convective initiation and storm behavior, as different scales can exhibit varying influences on the atmospheric conditions conducive to thunderstorm development. Research by Dutta et al. (2021) emphasizes that the integration of data from different scales, including satellite observations, radar data, and ground-based measurements, is essential for improving nowcasting capabilities. However, traditional numerical weather prediction models often struggle to accurately represent these interactions due to their limited resolution and inability to capture the intricate feedback mechanisms between different scales (Kumar et al., 2020). As a result, improving our understanding of multi-scale interactions and enhancing model capabilities to address these complexities is crucial for effective thunderstorm nowcasting in India.

5. Conclusion

The study demonstrates the thunderstorm nowcasting in detail. There are several challenges that meteorologists faced in nowcasting that includes rapid development, spatial and temporal variability, lack of data integration , model limitations , extreme weather conditions, lack of awareness in public and many more. This study helps the people to understand what thunderstorm nowcasting is and what are the major techniques which are currently used for nowcasting , what data resources are available in India. A holistic approach involving technological advancements, improved data integration, and active community involvement is crucial to tackle the difficulties of predicting thunderstorms in India. Enhancing observational networks through the addition of more ground-based weather stations and Doppler radar systems, especially in remote regions, will enhance the collection of real-time data. Furthermore, the use of high-resolution numerical weather prediction (NWP) models can improve forecast accuracy by capturing detailed atmospheric processes that impact the formation of thunderstorms. Combining data from different sources such as satellite imagery, radar, and crowd-sourced information will offer a more complete perspective on changing weather patterns. Additionally, the utilization of machine learning methods can examine extensive data sets to recognize patterns and enhance predictive abilities. Equally crucial is the requirement for strong communication plans that inform the public about thunderstorm dangers and guarantee timely distribution of weather alerts. India can improve its ability to predict severe weather events by promoting cooperation between meteorological agencies, researchers, and local communities, and by providing continuous training for meteorologists.

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