

# Chapter 17

# Deep Learning for Predictive Analytics in Environmental and Social Sciences

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Deep learning is currently one of the transformative technologies for predictive analytics, with deep learning providing robust methodologies to analyse complex data in both the environmental and social sciences. This chapter is concerned with looking into the use of some deep learning techniques, such as CNNs and RNNs, in modelling and predicting environmental phenomena and social trends. Deep learning techniques fit into the environmental sciences through the massive processing of remote sensing and observational data in climate modelling, disaster prediction, and ecologic monitoring. In the social sciences, it helps with sentiment analysis, behavioural predictions, and trend forecasting from large-scale social media and survey data. Key challenges include issues related to data quality and model interpretability; Highlighted case studies provide evidence of the effectiveness of deep learning in these domains.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Predictive analytics has emerged as an important tool for understanding and predicting complex systems, from environmental and social sciences to most other such fields. Deep learning has already made heavy strokes in this process of devel-

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-5573-2.ch017

opment by further enhancing predictive analytics, and now it enables the analysis of intricate patterns within large datasets. This introduction tries to delve into exactly how deep learning, as a subdomain of machine learning involving neural networks with multiple layers, has made it possible to revolutionize predictive analytics by providing potent methods for forecasting and decision-making within such domains(Zhong et al., 2021a).

Notably, predictive analytics plays a very essential role in addressing such critical topics in environmental sciences as climate change, natural disasters, and management of ecosystems. While traditional statistical models are useful, they often fall short when dealing with the size and complexity of the more modern data sources. With the increasing number of remote sensing technologies, like satellites and ground-based sensors, enormous datasets are generated that capture various environmental phenomena. Deep learning does a great job processing these high-dimensional data and provides very efficient methods for meaningful insights and prediction with accuracy(Hälterlein, 2021). For instance, Convolutional Neural Networks are excellent in spatial data analysis, such as satellite image analysis, for monitoring changes in land use, detection of deforestation, or the extent of damage from natural disasters. They process complex visual data, interpreting information that gives detailed assessment—a question of prime importance in environmental monitoring and management.

It is in the same way that the recurrent neural networks are good at handling time-dependent data, which becomes critically necessary in making predictions of weather patterns and climate dynamics. RNNs can scan the past sequences of weather data to identify periodic trends and tendencies in the forecast, helping to undertake more accurate predictions of extreme weather events such as hurricanes, floods, and heat waves. This, in turn, will create an ability very important in enhancing disaster preparedness and response strategies, hence minimizing the impact of such events on communities and ecosystems. Deep learning will enable researchers to come up with models that integrate diverse sources of data, such as atmospheric measurements and oceanic conditions, toward improving predictability with actionable insights for environmental policy and management(Zhong et al., 2021b).

The explosion of digital data from social media, online interactions, and other sources across the social sciences has changed the face of behavioral and societal research. Deep learning methods provide immensely useful tools for analyzing large and assorted data, offering advanced prediction analytics that can discover trends, sentiments, and behaviors. For example, deep learning-driven sentiment analysis can digest text data from social media sites for understanding public perception and sentiment toward issues as varied as politics and consumer preference. It gives insights into the social dynamics and public sentiments that help in monitoring them toward the formulation of policy decisions. Deep learning models identify

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