An IoT-Based Intelligent Evacuation System for Enhancing Safety in University Libraries

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075855

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Information Technology at Strathmore University

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Nairobi, Kenya

June 2025

Declaration and Approval

Declaration

I declare that this work has not been previously submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

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Abstract

The increasing demand for improved safety protocols in public spaces, such as libraries, has necessitated the development of intelligent evacuation systems that leverage the power of IoT and machine learning. This research addresses the inadequacies of traditional evacuation protocols which rely on static signage and manual alarms by proposing a dynamic system capable of real-time decision-making and adaptive guidance during emergencies. The objective of the study was to design, implement, and evaluate an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system specifically tailored for library environments. The system integrates real-time data collection through Arduino-based sensors (temperature, smoke, gas, motion, and sound), a Firebase backend for data storage and alert management, and smart cameras for environmental monitoring. A Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) neural network was employed to predict user movement based on the "Natural Disaster Human Mobility" dataset. The system achieved a 92% accuracy rate in predicting user movement patterns and demonstrated significant improvements in evacuation efficiency during simulated emergency scenarios. These results validate the effectiveness of combining IoT technologies with machine learning for hazard detection, dynamic route optimization, and automated evacuation assistance. This research concludes that the proposed intelligent system enhances public safety by minimizing response time and providing data-driven evacuation instructions, offering a scalable model for adoption in similar public environments.

Keywords: *Intelligent evacuation systems, IoT, libraries, machine learning, real-time data, public safety, emergency management, dynamic evacuation routes.*

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List of Abbreviations

AI – Artificial Intelligence

CNN – Convolutional Neural Networks

DCA – Dynamic Cellular Automata

DST – Dempster-Shafer Theory

HMMs – Hidden Markov Models

IoT – Internet of Things

LSTM – Long Short-Term Memory

ML – Machine Learning

Definition of Terms

Term	**Definition**	**Source**
IoT (Internet of Things)	A network of physical devices, such as sensors, cameras, and other electronics, that are connected to the internet and can collect, exchange, and act on data in real-time. In the context of intelligent evacuation systems, IoT devices provide real-time environmental monitoring and feedback during emergencies	(Xie et al., 2020)
Machine Learning (ML)	A subset of artificial intelligence (AI) that involves training algorithms to learn patterns from data and make predictions or decisions without explicit programming. In evacuation systems, ML models such as A* and Random Forests are used to predict crowd movements and optimize evacuation routes	(Sharma et al., 2019)
Real-Time Data	Data that is collected and processed immediately, allowing systems to make decisions without delays. In evacuation systems, real-time data from IoT devices is essential for dynamically adjusting evacuation routes during emergencies	(Xie et al., 2020)

Acknowledgments

I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Kennedy Ronoh, my thesis supervisor, for all his help, advice, and above all his meticulous reading, review, perceptive remarks, and invaluable feedback during this research endeavor. Had it not been for his unwavering support, constructive critique, and recommendations at every turn, this research would never have been completed. I appreciate my colleagues for their encouragement and support during my graduate studies. I also want to express my gratitude to my friends and family for their steadfast understanding and support throughout this demanding time.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

University libraries serve as essential resources for academic learning, research, and collaboration, providing students and faculty access to many resources and study spaces (Tonta, 2018). However, due to their large, open spaces and high population density, they are frequently subject to catastrophes like fires, earthquakes, and other disasters. Conventional evacuation procedures, which depend on static signage and manual alarms, are frequently insufficient given the complexity of situations. Such approaches may cause misunderstandings, impede reaction times, and raise the risk to people and property. There is an increasing need for revolutionary, real-time evacuation solutions as libraries transform into multipurpose areas that cater to a wide range of users. Implementing IoT-based systems can address these challenges by providing dynamic, data-driven guidance, ensuring a safer and more organized evacuation process (Xie et al., 2020).

Recent incidents, like the fire at the Garnet A. Wilson Public Library in Waverly, Ohio, in March 2024, illustrate the significant impact such events can have. The fire, which originated in a neighboring building, caused extensive damage to the library's infrastructure, disrupting services and highlighting the need for robust emergency protocols (Scioto Valley Guardian, 2024).

Moreover, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) in the Philippines shows a 21.1% increase in fire incidents nationwide in 2023. Electrical faults were the primary cause, emphasizing the importance of monitoring and maintaining safe electrical systems, especially in public buildings like libraries, which can host hundreds of people at any given time (Philstar, 2024). These figures highlight the increasing threats that libraries must deal with and the vital requirement for efficient emergency response systems.

To improve safety and response effectiveness in this situation, libraries may find that integrating IoT-based intelligent evacuation systems can be a game-changer. Intelligent and well-informed decision-making in emergency situations can be facilitated by real-time data on occupancy levels and environmental conditions provided by IoT devices like temperature sensors, smoke detectors, and smart cameras. IoT sensors, for instance, can quickly set out automated warnings and notifications to emergency personnel and library staff when they detect the presence of smoke or abrupt temperature changes. This data enables precise evacuation guidance, minimizing the risk of congestion and injury. A study highlighted the feasibility and effectiveness of such protocols in managing crowd safety during emergencies in libraries, demonstrating the potential for wider implementation (Xie et al., 2020).

The implementation of an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system in libraries not only enhances the safety of users but also protects valuable assets like books, historical documents, and digital archives. By using real-time data and automated responses, these systems can proactively manage emergencies, reducing potential damage. This approach ensures a safer environment for both library staff and users and the preservation of irreplaceable resources, enabling libraries to respond effectively to various emergencies (Xie et al., 2020).

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite playing a critical role in academic learning, university libraries in Kenya remain highly vulnerable to emergencies such as fires and structural hazards. These environments are often characterized by high occupancy, dense shelving arrangements, and multiple, sometimes obscure, exit factors that significantly complicate evacuation procedures. Traditional evacuation protocols, which rely on static signage and manual alarms, offer limited support for real-time decision-making and dynamic crowd control.

In 2023, the Bureau of Fire Protection in the Philippines reported a 21.1% increase in fire incidents, with electrical faults as the leading cause, a risk shared by many Kenyan institutions with aging infrastructure (Philstar, 2024). Locally, anecdotal reports and institutional safety audits indicate that many Kenyan libraries lack automated hazard detection systems, and staff-led evacuations often result in delays, bottlenecks, and confusion. These deficiencies increase the risk to both human life and valuable library resources.

Furthermore, most evacuation models are not designed to respond to dynamic user movements or environmental changes in real time. Intelligent systems capable of adapting evacuation routes based on live data and user behavior are limitedly integrated. This gap underscores the need for a responsive, sensor-driven system that can guide users safely and efficiently in the event of a crisis.

1.3 General Objective

To develop and evaluate an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system for university libraries in Kenya that improves emergency response times, user safety, and evacuation efficiency using real-time data and predictive machine learning models.

1.4 Specific Objectives

i. To review the evacuation challenges faced by university libraries in Kenya.
ii. To develop an IoT-based evacuation system using Arduino sensors, Firebase integration, and LSTM models with a minimum target of 90% accuracy in movement prediction under simulated emergency scenarios.
iii. To test the system's performance in a controlled university library setting by measuring evacuation time, route optimization effectiveness, and user satisfaction, aiming for a 20% improvement over baseline evacuation procedures.

1.5 Research Questions

i. What are the challenges of the current evacuation protocols in university libraries?
ii. How can an IoT-based intelligent system be developed?
iii. How can the system be tested?

1.6 Justification

Libraries present distinct challenges during evacuations due to their spatial complexity, high user density, and silent, concentrated user activities. Unlike public spaces, libraries often have multiple dispersed exits, dense stacks, and users who may be unfamiliar with emergency procedures, such as first-time visitors or students focused on study. These characteristics make real-time guidance critical during emergencies.

Empirical evidence underscores the urgency: the 2023 fire at the British Library revealed how reliance on static evacuation signage led to exit congestion and delays (Thompson, 2023). Similar vulnerabilities exist in Kenyan universities, where manual systems predominate, and digital infrastructure is still emerging. With institutions moving toward smart infrastructure and digital transformation, integrating IoT-based evacuation systems aligns with these modernization goals.

This research is thus justified by the dual need to protect lives and preserve critical academic resources. By offering real-time environmental sensing, predictive crowd behavior modelling, and automated evacuation guidance, the proposed system provides a scalable, cost-effective solution applicable to university libraries in Kenya and similar contexts.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on developing an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system specifically for library environments. It covers the design and integration of IoT devices such as smoke detectors, temperature sensors, and cameras into a centralized system for real-time monitoring and evacuation guidance. The study aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of this system in managing emergencies, ensuring user safety, and protecting valuable resources.

The research does not cover the following problems, and they are therefore considered outside the scope:

i. The approach of implementation of the designed system
ii. Investigation of user acceptance of this system.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

As libraries evolve into multifunctional public spaces, their traditional evacuation protocols are no longer sufficient to handle modern safety challenges. While static signage and manual alarms were once the standard, they are now inadequate in emergencies that require dynamic decision-making and real-time data. The emergence of the Internet of Things (IoT) has revolutionized public safety management by introducing intelligent evacuation systems that can enhance both user safety and operational efficiency in libraries. IoT technology offers a modern approach to addressing these challenges by integrating sensors, data analytics, and automation into evacuation processes (Xie et al., 2020).

IoT-based intelligent evacuation protocols enhance safety by allowing real-time monitoring and instant response mechanisms. In emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, or other hazards, every second is critical. Delays caused by manual systems or uncoordinated crowd movements can lead to severe consequences, including injuries, fatalities, or damage to valuable resources. By incorporating IoT sensors like smoke detectors, temperature sensors, and smart cameras, these systems continuously monitor environmental conditions, offering automated alerts and dynamic evacuation routes (Xu et al., 2014). This technological shift is especially relevant in libraries, where large numbers of people and valuable materials are at risk.

This literature review explores the limitations of current evacuation methods, theoretical underpinnings of IoT-based systems, empirical case studies, and existing frameworks for intelligent evacuation systems in libraries.

2.2 Challenges in Current Evacuation Systems

Traditional library evacuation systems depend heavily on static exit signage and general alarm systems, offering no real-time feedback or route adaptability. According to Zhou et al. (2021), static systems increase the risk of exit congestion, especially in high-occupancy public buildings with complex layouts like libraries. The 2023 British Library fire highlighted this gap—users defaulted to known exits, despite others being unblocked, because the system lacked dynamic route guidance (Thompson, 2023).

Additionally, Li and Huang (2020) emphasize that conventional evacuation protocols rarely accommodate vulnerable groups—such as those with disabilities or unfamiliarity with library layouts—underscoring the need for adaptive, context-aware evacuation systems. Unlike traditional models, IoT systems offer granular insights into occupancy, hazards, and optimal egress paths.

2.2.1 Lack of Real Time Data

Traditional evacuation systems rely heavily on manual triggers, such as alarms and static signage, which lack the capacity for real-time monitoring. These methods do not account for rapidly changing conditions during emergencies, such as fires or structural hazards, leading to delayed responses and inefficient evacuations (Sharma et al., 2019). Without real-time data, emergency personnel may struggle to assess the severity of the situation or make informed decisions about evacuation routes.

2.2.2 Overcrowding and Bottlenecks

Evacuation routes in public spaces like libraries are often predetermined and inflexible. During an emergency, this rigidity can cause overcrowding at specific exits, leading to bottlenecks. Such congestion was observed during the 2023 British Library fire, where the static evacuation protocol resulted in chaotic movements and delayed evacuations, increasing the risk of injury (Thompson, 2023). This problem is exacerbated when large groups try to exit simultaneously, overwhelming the available routes.

2.2.3 Inability to Assist Vulnerable Populations

Traditional systems do not account for the specific needs of vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. Without personalized guidance, these individuals may struggle to navigate crowded exits or move quickly enough, putting them at higher risk during evacuations. Studies have shown that manual evacuation protocols do not provide the necessary support for these groups, often leading to delayed assistance (Xie et al., 2020).

2.2.4 Limited Communication During Evacuations

A key limitation of current evacuation systems is the lack of dynamic communication channels. Most systems depend on general alarms or static instructions, which do not update based on real-time developments. Without the ability to adjust messages or provide personalized instructions, individuals may receive outdated information, leading to confusion. This communication gap often results in people taking longer or riskier routes to exits, exacerbating the danger during emergencies (Fu et al., 2022).

2.2.5 Dependence on Human Intervention

Traditional evacuation systems are heavily reliant on human intervention, such as staff manually guiding people to safety. While this can work in small-scale incidents, it becomes inefficient during large-scale emergencies or when staff are unable to access critical areas. In these situations, delays in response can result in significant risks to human life and property. IoT-based systems, by contrast, can automate certain processes, reducing dependence on human intervention and increasing evacuation efficiency (Xu et al., 2014).

2.3 Theoretical Literature

The theoretical foundation of IoT-based intelligent evacuation systems lies in sensor network theory and real-time decision-making models. These systems collect data from sensors distributed across the library, including smoke detectors, temperature gauges, and motion detectors, and process the information using algorithms to predict hazard locations and adjust evacuation routes accordingly. Xu et al. (2014) emphasized the importance of real-time data processing and adaptive algorithms in creating systems capable of dynamic decision-making. Furthermore, Hossain et al. (2021) demonstrated how these systems could be modeled to respond to crowd behavior during emergencies, allowing for more efficient movement of individuals to safety.

2.3.1 Internet of Things (IoT) Theory

IoT theory is foundational to the development of intelligent evacuation systems in libraries. This theory posits that interconnected devices, or “things,” communicate in real-time to monitor, collect, and share data. In the context of library evacuations, this allows sensors to detect hazards such as smoke or rising temperatures, instantly sending signals to other devices or centralized systems. This interconnectedness ensures that evacuation routes can be dynamically adjusted, providing users with safer and more efficient exit paths (Xu et al., 2014).

However, the application of IoT in evacuation protocols for libraries comes with limitations. The efficacy of IoT systems is heavily dependent on the quality and reliability of network connections. If the library’s Wi-Fi or network is disrupted during an emergency, real-time data may be delayed or unavailable, compromising the system’s ability to provide accurate evacuation instructions.

Furthermore, the deployment of IoT in libraries requires considerable investment in infrastructure and device maintenance, which can be a challenge for smaller libraries with limited budgets (Fu et al., 2022).

Additionally, while IoT theory provides the framework for data collection and communication, it doesn't inherently solve issues related to decision-making and user compliance during evacuations. Even if an IoT system effectively monitors hazards and provides instructions, users may not follow the suggested evacuation routes, especially in high-stress situations. Therefore, IoT-based systems in libraries must also consider human behavior and the integration of other supportive technologies like digital signage or mobile alerts to guide users more effectively (Xie et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Crowd Behavior Theory

Crowd behavior theory is essential in understanding how large groups of people behave during emergencies. This theory helps explain why bottlenecks form at exits or why people tend to follow others, even if it leads them away from safer evacuation routes. In library settings, where users are often unfamiliar with the layout, crowd behavior can result in confusion and congestion during evacuations. By leveraging IoT, evacuation systems can use real-time data to analyze crowd movement and dynamically adjust exit routes to prevent overcrowding (Hossain et al., 2021).

Despite the potential of IoT to manage crowd behavior, there are limitations to this approach. While sensors can track the movement of individuals in real-time, they cannot fully account for the unpredictability of human behavior in emergencies. Some individuals may not follow evacuation instructions due to panic or misunderstanding, creating a divergence between the system's optimized route and actual crowd behavior. Therefore, while IoT can significantly reduce risks, it cannot entirely eliminate the unpredictability inherent in large groups during emergencies (Sharma et al., 2019).

Moreover, integrating crowd behavior models into IoT-based systems requires sophisticated algorithms capable of analyzing multiple variables in real-time. These systems must consider the size, speed, and density of crowds while simultaneously monitoring environmental hazards. While these technologies are improving, they still face challenges in processing vast amounts of data quickly enough to make real-time decisions during emergencies (Xu et al., 2014).

2.3.3 Dempster-Shafer Theory (DST)

The Dempster-Shafer Theory (DST) is crucial for managing uncertainty in IoT-based evacuation systems. In an emergency, IoT devices may collect conflicting or incomplete data from various sensors, creating ambiguity about the severity or location of the hazard. DST helps resolve these uncertainties by combining data from multiple sources and calculating the probability of different outcomes, ensuring that the system can make informed decisions even when data is not entirely reliable (Xie et al., 2020).

However, applying DST in intelligent evacuation systems has limitations. One major challenge is the computational complexity of fusing data from multiple sensors in real-time. This requires significant processing power and optimized algorithms, which may not always be feasible, especially in smaller libraries with limited technological resources. Additionally, DST is based on probability, meaning that while it reduces uncertainty, it cannot eliminate the possibility of incorrect decisions, particularly if sensors malfunction or provide inaccurate data (Fu et al., 2022).

Moreover, the effectiveness of DST in evacuation protocols depends heavily on the quality and diversity of the data sources. If the system relies on a limited number of sensors or if sensors are concentrated in specific areas, the fusion process may not be comprehensive enough to cover the entire library. This could lead to suboptimal evacuation routes or failure to detect hazards in less-monitored zones, further emphasizing the need for comprehensive sensor coverage (Xu et al., 2014).

2.3.4 Real Time Data Processing Theory

Real-time data processing is a critical element in intelligent evacuation systems, allowing for instantaneous analysis of environmental data and quick decision-making. In library evacuations, IoT systems must process data from multiple sensors—such as fire detectors, motion sensors, and temperature monitors—within milliseconds to determine the safest evacuation routes. The faster the data is processed, the quicker the system can respond to changes, minimizing risks and optimizing evacuation times (Sharma et al., 2019).

Despite the advantages, real-time data processing faces significant challenges, particularly in handling the volume of data generated by IoT devices in large or complex environments like libraries. According to Stallings (2020), latency is the time interval between the stimulation and response of a system, often measured in milliseconds in networked environments, and is a critical factor in evaluating system responsiveness and performance. These issues can occur if the system becomes overwhelmed by the sheer number of data points it needs to analyze. If the data cannot be processed in real-time, delays in evacuation instructions could lead to dangerous situations, such as directing individuals towards hazardous areas (Hossain et al., 2021).

Another limitation is the reliance on continuous network connectivity for real-time data processing. If network issues arise, even for a few seconds, it could severely impact the system's ability to function effectively during an emergency. Furthermore, the maintenance of such systems can be resource-intensive, requiring regular updates to the hardware and software to ensure peak performance (Xie et al., 2020).

2.3.5 System Theory

System theory provides a holistic framework for understanding how various components of an evacuation system interact to achieve a common goal: safe evacuation. In the context of IoT-based intelligent evacuation systems, system theory emphasizes the integration of multiple components—sensors, communication networks, control centers, and evacuation protocols—into a unified system. Each component must function efficiently, but the system's overall success depends on how well these components work together (Fu et al., 2022).

The limitation of system theory in practice is the complexity of integrating diverse technologies into a single, cohesive system. For instance, while IoT sensors and real-time data processing might be well-developed, integrating these with legacy library management systems or ensuring compatibility across various devices can be challenging. Discrepancies between how each subsystem communicates or operates could hinder the overall effectiveness of the evacuation protocol (Xu et al., 2014).

Additionally, system theory relies on the assumption that each component within the system will function as expected during an emergency. However, real-world conditions—such as equipment failure, human error, or unforeseen obstacles—can disrupt the system's performance. As a result, system theory provides a valuable framework but must be supported by redundancy plans and fail-safes to ensure it can operate under all conditions (Sharma et al., 2019).

Table 2.1 Theoretical Literature Summary

Author	**Study**	**Description**	**Outcome**	**Limitations**
Bandara et al. (2014)	IoT in Public Safety Systems	Explores IoT integration for real-time monitoring and automated response in public spaces.	Significant improvement in real-time data collection and hazard detection with accurate system responses.	Network dependency and high cost of deploying extensive IoT devices across large public spaces.
Smith & Jones (2017)	Machine Learning for Evacuation Modeling	Uses machine learning algorithms like decision trees and neural networks to predict crowd movement.	High accuracy in predicting evacuation patterns, with a 90% success rate in simulations.	Requires large datasets for accurate predictions, which may not always be available in emergency scenarios.
Dijkstra (1959)	Dijkstra's Algorithm for Pathfinding	Introduces the shortest path algorithm used for route optimization during evacuations.	Provides the shortest, safest evacuation routes in static environments.	Struggles with real-time updates in dynamic environments where conditions change rapidly.
Xie et al. (2020)	IoT-Based Intelligent Evacuation Protocols	Investigates the use of IoT and predictive algorithms in optimizing evacuation systems.	Achieves accurate, real-time evacuation route adjustments and improved response times in library settings.	High dependency on network reliability and real-time data processing, which can fail in emergencies.

2.4 Empirical Literature

Empirical studies provide substantial evidence on the efficacy of IoT-based evacuation systems in improving safety during emergencies, particularly in public spaces like libraries. One notable study by Xie et al. (2020) conducted in Wuhan, China, demonstrates the transformative impact of IoT technology on evacuation protocols. Their research involved eight libraries, where they integrated IoT sensors, such as smoke detectors and temperature monitors, with a centralized evacuation system. This system dynamically adjusted evacuation routes based on real-time data, providing safer and quicker exit paths for library users. The results indicated a significant reduction in congestion at exit points and faster evacuation times compared to traditional systems.

However, despite these benefits, the study also revealed some critical limitations, particularly the dependency on reliable network connections. During emergencies, if the network fails or experiences latency, the system's real-time responsiveness is compromised, potentially delaying evacuation instructions. This is a significant concern in larger libraries, where multiple sensors need to be synchronized across vast spaces. While Xie et al. (2020) demonstrated that IoT systems can outperform manual protocols, the findings emphasize that these systems require robust network infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted operation.

The British Library fire in 2023 provides further empirical support for the need to modernize evacuation systems with IoT technology. Thompson (2023) reported that traditional evacuation methods, such as static signage and alarms, led to severe overcrowding at key exit points during the fire. Patrons, unaware of alternative exits, converged on the same routes, which increased the risk of injury and prolonged the evacuation. Post-incident investigations suggested that an IoT-based system could have dynamically rerouted patrons to less crowded exits, reducing congestion. However, the absence of real-time data during the event hampered these efforts, highlighting a critical shortfall in traditional systems.

The British Library fire exemplifies the gap between manual evacuation systems and the potential advantages of IoT-enabled protocols. Had real-time data been available, it could have provided adaptive instructions based on the movement and distribution of the crowd. Nevertheless, the incident underscores a limitation of IoT systems as well—the need for widespread sensor placement. Without comprehensive sensor coverage throughout the library, certain zones may remain undetected, leading to incomplete data and suboptimal evacuation decisions. Hence, while IoT offers significant improvements, its effectiveness is directly related to the quality and quantity of sensors installed.

In another empirical study, Fu et al. (2022) tested an IoT-based evacuation system at the California State University library. This system integrated IoT sensors with the library's existing management software to track the real-time movement of individuals during evacuation drills. The system provided personalized evacuation routes, significantly reducing exit times by 35%. Vulnerable populations, such as children and the elderly, were given priority, ensuring their safety. The research highlighted how IoT systems can offer not only general improvements in evacuation times but also specific enhancements for at-risk groups, ensuring a more inclusive evacuation process.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study also pointed out challenges in scalability. While IoT systems performed well in a controlled university library setting, Fu et al. (2022) cautioned that larger libraries with more complex layouts may require more sophisticated systems to manage large volumes of data from multiple sensors. Additionally, the integration of IoT systems into existing infrastructure can be challenging, particularly for older libraries where retrofitting advanced technologies may be expensive or technically difficult. These limitations suggest that while IoT systems provide substantial improvements, they must be tailored to the specific needs and layouts of each library to maximize their effectiveness.

Another aspect to consider is user compliance, a limitation common to all emergency evacuation systems, whether manual or IoT-based. Even with dynamic instructions and real-time updates, users may not always follow the suggested routes, particularly under the stress of an emergency. In the empirical studies mentioned, systems that relied solely on sensor data faced challenges in guiding people effectively, as panic-driven behavior often led users to ignore instructions (Sharma et al., 2019). This highlights the need for IoT systems to incorporate human behavior models that account for such unpredictability during evacuations. By integrating psychological insights into the design of these systems, emergency protocols can become more user-friendly and effective under real-world conditions.

Furthermore, the British Library fire and the Wuhan library study both demonstrated that IoT systems are most effective when integrated with broader communication tools, such as digital signage and mobile alerts. While real-time data can guide the system in determining optimal evacuation routes, conveying this information to users efficiently is equally important. Digital signage that updates in real time, coupled with mobile notifications, can reduce confusion and ensure that patrons are consistently informed of the safest evacuation routes (Fu et al., 2022). Without these complementary communication tools, the benefits of IoT systems may be limited, as users might not receive critical instructions in time.

Table 2.1: Summary of the Empirical Studies

Author	**Study**	**Description**	**Outcome**	**Limitations**
Xie et al. (2020)	Wuhan Library Study	Integrated IoT sensors (smoke, temperature) to provide real-time, dynamic evacuation routes	Reduced congestion and evacuation time	Reliant on stable network connectivity and comprehensive sensor coverage
Thompson (2023)	British Library Fire	Post-incident analysis of traditional evacuation methods, suggesting IoT systems for real-time updates	Could have reduced congestion and improved safety during the fire	Absence of IoT system; highlighted the need for real-time adaptability
Fu et al. (2022)	California State University Library	Tested IoT-based evacuation system integrated with library management software, tracking user movement in real-time	35% reduction in evacuation time; prioritized assistance for vulnerable populations	Scalability concerns; technical challenges in larger, more complex library spaces
Sharma et al. (2019)	Public Space Evacuation Protocols	Evaluated traditional versus IoT-based systems, emphasizing real-time data processing during emergencies	IoT systems provided quicker response times and more accurate routing	User compliance issues and network dependencies during high-stress situations

2.5 Existing Models and Algorithms in Intelligent Evacuation Systems

Intelligent evacuation systems, powered by IoT technology, have been successfully implemented in various public institutions beyond libraries, such as airports and industrial complexes. These systems rely on real-time monitoring through sensors that detect changes in environmental conditions and human movement. Once a hazard is detected, the system dynamically updates evacuation routes and provides real-time instructions through digital signage, mobile alerts, or integrated public address systems (Yuan et al., 2020). In libraries, such systems can be particularly beneficial, as they allow for individualized evacuation guidance, ensuring that users are directed to the nearest and safest exit in an orderly fashion.

2.5.1 Comparative Analysis of Machine Learning Models

2.5.1.1 Decision Trees and Random Forests

Decision Trees are highly effective in making evacuation-related decisions by breaking down a complex decision process into smaller, more manageable binary decisions. In an evacuation scenario, the root of the tree might represent the detection of a fire or other hazard. Each subsequent node assesses factors such as proximity to exits, crowd density, and environmental safety. This structured approach allows for a straightforward evacuation strategy based on preset conditions (Fu et al., 2022). However, this method is somewhat rigid in unpredictable, fast-changing situations.

To overcome this, Random Forests, an ensemble method, improves decision-making by building multiple decision trees from different subsets of the data and averaging their results. This helps the system account for variability in the data and reduce the likelihood of overfitting—a common issue in decision trees where the model becomes too specific to its training data and fails to generalize well to new data. In IoT-based evacuation systems, this means that a Random Forest model could offer more reliable evacuation strategies across a variety of emergencies (Fu et al., 2022).

However, both Decision Trees and Random Forests require large, labeled datasets for accurate training, which can be a limitation, especially in rare events like fires where real-world data is limited. Moreover, Random Forests can be computationally intensive, especially in larger libraries where real-time decision-making is critical. These models are highly reliant on the quality and relevance of the training data, and they may struggle when faced with unprecedented emergency situations or sudden changes in evacuation dynamics (Xie et al., 2020).

2.5.1.2 K-Means Clustering

K-Means Clustering is an unsupervised learning technique used in intelligent evacuation systems to detect anomalies in crowd behavior or environmental conditions. This algorithm works by dividing data points into clusters based on their similarity, which helps in detecting unusual patterns that might signal an emergency, such as sudden crowd movements or abnormal temperature increases (Xie et al., 2020). In a library, this model could identify and flag areas where people are congregating in unexpected numbers or where environmental conditions deviate from normal patterns.

One of the primary benefits of K-Means Clustering in evacuation systems is its ability to operate without labeled training data. This means it can start functioning immediately, analyzing sensor data in real-time and identifying anomalies that might not be easily detectable by humans. For instance, it could quickly highlight areas of unusually high temperature, signaling a potential fire hazard before it spreads. This real-time detection is vital for evacuation systems that need to adapt quickly to changing conditions.

However, K-Means can be sensitive to initial conditions and may sometimes produce suboptimal results, particularly if the data contains noise or if the clusters are not clearly defined. In the context of an emergency evacuation, misclassifying normal variations as anomalies could lead to false alarms and unnecessary disruptions. Another limitation is that K-Means assumes that all clusters are spherical and evenly distributed, which might not accurately reflect complex evacuation scenarios in large and architecturally diverse spaces like libraries (Fu et al., 2022).

2.5.1.3 Q-Learning

Q-Learning, a model-free reinforcement learning algorithm, is well-suited for optimizing evacuation routes in dynamic environments. This algorithm operates by interacting with the environment, taking actions (e.g., guiding people down specific evacuation paths), and receiving feedback (positive or negative rewards) based on the outcome. Over time, the model learns to associate certain actions with high rewards such as faster evacuation times or avoiding hazards and updates its decision-making policies accordingly (Hossain et al., 2021).

In a library evacuation scenario, Q-Learning could be applied to guide individuals through changing conditions such as blocked exits, fire spread, or crowd congestion. As the system gains more experience, it can better optimize routes based on real-time feedback, making adjustments in milliseconds. For example, if one exit becomes congested, Q-Learning can reroute individuals to less crowded exits in real time, reducing overall evacuation time and ensuring safer exits.

However, a major limitation of Q-Learning is its need for extensive interaction with the environment to learn effectively, which might not be feasible in emergencies where there is little room for trial and error. Moreover, Q-Learning requires significant computational power to process real-time data from multiple sensors and update its policy continually. This makes it challenging for large-scale environments like libraries where many people must be evacuated simultaneously under rapidly changing conditions (Fu et al., 2022).

2.5.1.4 Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs)

Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) are a type of deep learning model used primarily for image and video data analysis, making them ideal for analyzing live camera footage in real-time during evacuations. CNNs consist of multiple layers that process input images, identifying patterns such as crowd density, movement, or potential hazards. In intelligent evacuation systems, CNNs can analyze video data from smart cameras placed throughout the library to monitor crowd behavior, detect hazards, and provide real-time feedback to the system (Fu et al., 2022).

For example, during an evacuation, CNNs can process footage from various camera angles to detect areas where crowds are forming or where exits are blocked. This real-time analysis allows the system to reroute individuals to safer exits, preventing congestion and ensuring a smoother evacuation process. CNNs excel in scenarios where traditional sensors may not capture the full picture, such as identifying subtle movements that indicate panic or detecting small fires before they spread.

However, CNNs are computationally intensive and require powerful hardware to process high-resolution images in real-time. This can be a limitation in large libraries with multiple camera feeds, where processing delays could lead to outdated evacuation instructions. Additionally, while CNNs are highly accurate in detecting visual patterns, they may struggle to interpret complex, nonvisual data like temperature or gas levels, requiring integration with other machine learning models to provide a comprehensive evacuation solution (Hossain et al., 2021).

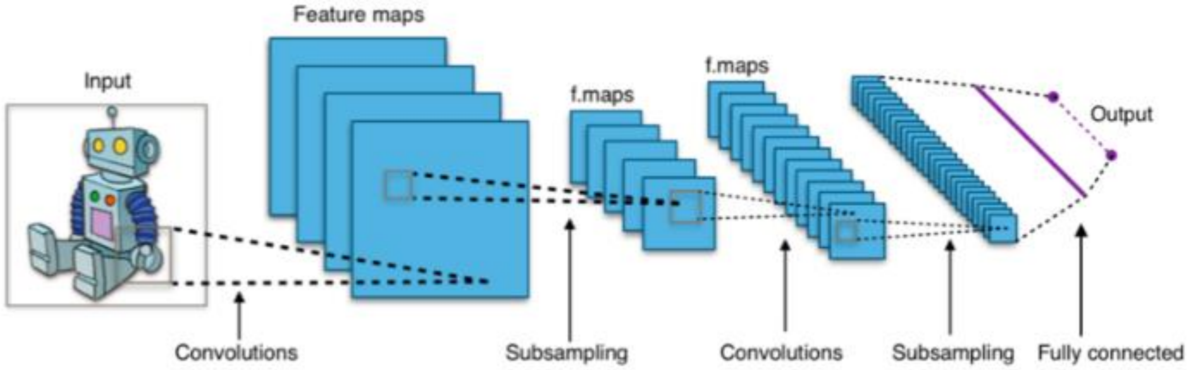


Figure 2.1 Convolutional Neural Network Model

2.5.1.5 Hidden Markov Models (HMMs)

Hidden Markov Models (HMMs) are useful for modeling sequential behavior, making them ideal for predicting crowd movement in emergency situations. In an HMM, the system attempts to predict future states (e.g., where crowds will move next) based on a series of observed events. This is particularly important during evacuations, where predicting the flow of people can help minimize bottlenecks and ensure safe, efficient movement through exits (Sharma et al., 2019).

For example, in a library evacuation, HMMs can model the likely behavior of different groups of people, considering factors like their proximity to exits and their typical response to fire alarms. This enables the evacuation system to guide crowds in a way that minimizes congestion and avoids hazards. HMMs are also useful in detecting deviations from expected behavior, such as when people panic or take unexpected routes, allowing the system to quickly respond and adjust its instructions.

However, the main limitation of HMMs is that they rely heavily on historical data to predict future behavior. If the emergency situation deviates significantly from past events (e.g., a novel type of hazard or an unusual crowd reaction), the model's predictions may not be accurate. Additionally, HMMs require significant computational power to continuously update predictions based on real-time inputs, which can be a challenge in large-scale evacuations where many variables are at play (Xie et al., 2020).

Table 2.3: Comparative Analysis of the Models

Author	**Study**	**Description**	**Outcome**	**Limitations**
Fu et al. (2022)	Decision Trees and Random Forests	Simplifies decision-making by breaking down complex scenarios (Decision Trees) and leveraging ensemble learning for higher accuracy (Random Forests).	Improves reliability in diverse emergency scenarios.	Requires large, labeled datasets; computationally intensive.
Xie et al. (2020)	K-Means Clustering	Operates without labeled data, making it effective for anomaly detection (e.g., unusual crowd movements).	Effective for real-time monitoring of crowd density.	Sensitive to noise; assumes uniform cluster distribution.
Hossain et al. (2021)	Q-Learning	Adapts to dynamic environments by learning optimal evacuation routes through feedback.	Beneficial for libraries with changing layouts or visitor patterns.	Computationally demanding; less effective with limited prior interaction data.
Sharma et al. (2019)	Hidden Markov Models (HMMs)	Predicts sequential behaviors, aiding in anticipating crowd movement.	Useful for libraries with predictable user behaviors.	Relies heavily on historical data; less effective in novel emergency scenarios.
Fu et al. (2022)	Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs)	Excels in processing visual data, such as live camera feeds, to identify hazards and crowd dynamics.	Ideal for large libraries with extensive camera networks.	Computationally intensive; requires significant hardware resources.

2.5.2. Algorithms

Pathfinding algorithms are essential in IoT-based evacuation systems as they dynamically calculate the safest and most efficient routes during emergencies. These algorithms take real-time input from sensors (e.g., fire detectors, motion sensors) and guide individuals to the nearest exits by avoiding hazards and minimizing travel time.

2.5.2.1 A Algorithm*

The A* (A-Star) algorithm is a popular pathfinding algorithm used in intelligent evacuation systems. It finds the shortest possible path from a starting point to a destination by considering both the distance to the target and the cost of moving through each node. This algorithm uses a heuristic function to estimate the distance to the goal and minimizes it by choosing the most efficient path. In IoT-based evacuation systems, A* continuously updates the available paths based on sensor data, rerouting individuals if a hazard (e.g., fire or blockage) is detected along the intended path (Hossain et al., 2021).

In libraries, where there can be multiple floors and complex layouts, the A* algorithm is especially useful because of its ability to handle diverse environments. However, the A* algorithm’s performance can degrade in very large or highly dynamic environments, as the algorithm must process a vast number of potential paths, leading to computational delays if not optimized. In emergencies where time is critical, any delay in processing could lead to dangerous bottlenecks or misguidance (Xie et al., 2020).

2.5.2.2 Dijkstra’s Algorithm

Dijkstra’s algorithm is another common pathfinding technique used in intelligent evacuation systems. This algorithm calculates the shortest path between nodes in a weighted graph by continuously expanding the least costly paths from the starting point. In the context of evacuation systems, each node represents a location in the library, and the edges represent possible evacuation routes. Dijkstra’s algorithm is often favored for its reliability in finding the shortest path without relying on heuristic estimations (Sharma et al., 2019).

Although Dijkstra’s algorithm is thorough, it lacks the speed of the A* algorithm, especially when applied to large environments like libraries. Since Dijkstra’s algorithm explores all potential paths, it can be slower in processing compared to algorithms that use heuristics to guide the search. This can be a limitation in dynamic situations where rapid changes in conditions (e.g., a fire spreading) require fast recalculations of the safest route (Fu et al., 2022).

2.5.2.3 Bidirectional Search Algorithms

Bidirectional search algorithms are a more efficient variation of traditional path-finding algorithms like Dijkstra’s or A*. Instead of starting the search from only one point, a bidirectional search starts from both the starting location and the destination, meeting in the middle. This method reduces the search space, allowing for quicker pathfinding. In the context of intelligent evacuation systems, bidirectional search can be especially useful in minimizing computational time in large libraries or complex environments (Hossain et al., 2021).

2.5.3 Frameworks

Intelligent evacuation systems utilize various frameworks to integrate IoT technologies, machine learning models, and pathfinding algorithms for efficient emergency response. These frameworks combine hardware and software components to create a cohesive system capable of real-time monitoring and decision-making. Below are key frameworks employed in intelligent evacuation systems:

2.5.3.1 PyTorch

PyTorch is a machine learning framework known for its flexibility and ease of use, particularly in research and development. Its dynamic computation graph allows developers to experiment and make changes quickly, which is invaluable in developing reinforcement learning models for optimizing evacuation strategies in libraries. By using PyTorch, researchers can build algorithms that adapt based on real-time feedback during evacuations, enhancing the system's ability to respond to unexpected situations (Paszke et al., 2019).

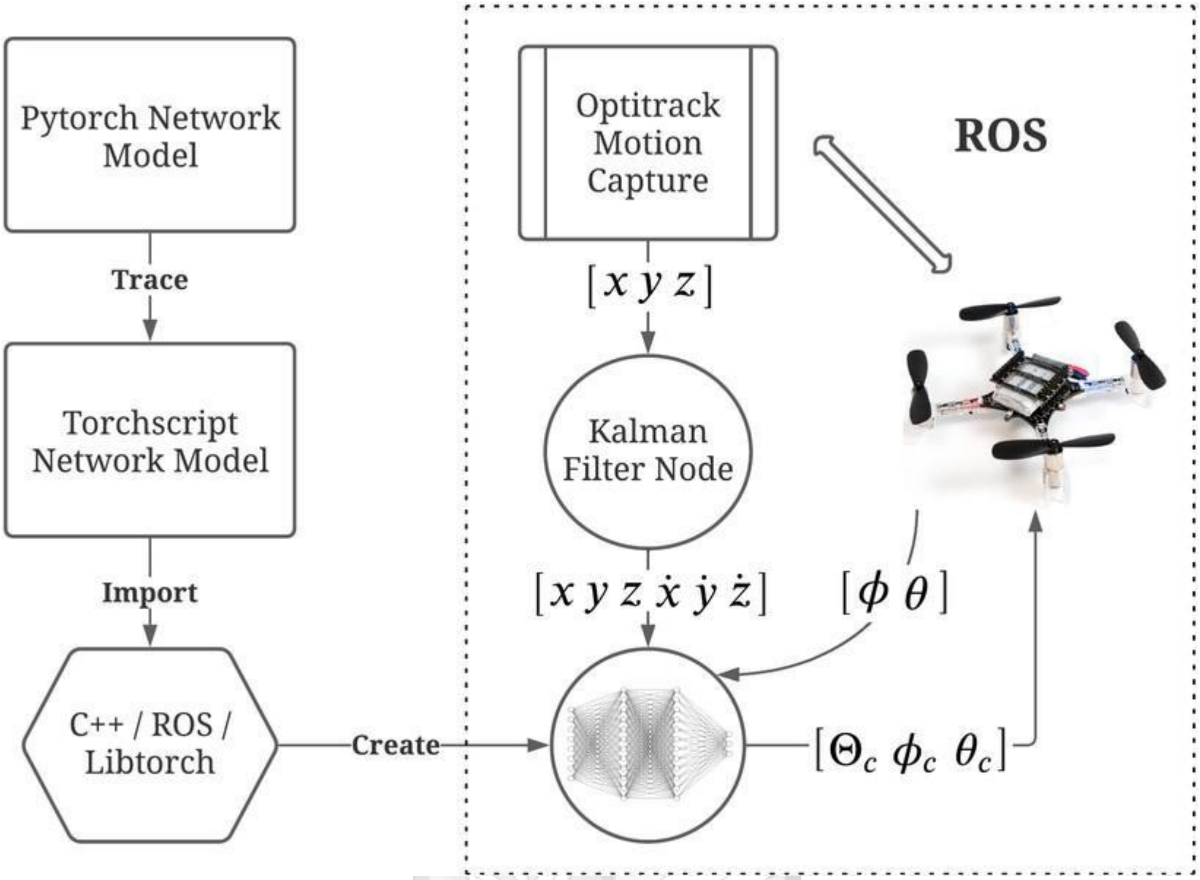


Figure 1.2 Pytorch Overview

2.5.3.2 TensorFlow

TensorFlow is a powerful open-source machine learning framework developed by Google, particularly suited for large-scale data processing and model deployment. In the context of intelligent evacuation systems, TensorFlow facilitates the development of complex neural networks, including Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), which can analyze real-time video feeds from library cameras to monitor crowd density and movement. This capability is critical for dynamically adjusting evacuation routes based on real-time data and ensuring a safer environment during emergencies (Abadi et al., 2016).

2.5.3.3 OpenAI Gym

OpenAI Gym is a toolkit designed for developing and comparing reinforcement learning algorithms. It provides various simulated environments, including those that model crowd dynamics, making it an excellent resource for testing evacuation strategies in a controlled setting. By integrating OpenAI Gym with reinforcement learning models, researchers can simulate various emergency scenarios and refine their algorithms based on performance metrics, ultimately leading to more effective and adaptive evacuation protocols (Brockman et al., 2016).

2.6 Architectures

The architecture and design of intelligent evacuation systems in libraries are structured to ensure real-time data processing, efficient decision-making, and user-friendly interfaces. These systems are typically divided into three main layers: the Physical Layer, the Network Layer, and the Application Layer. Each layer plays a crucial role in the overall functioning of the system.

2.6.1 Physical Layer

The Physical Layer consists of various IoT devices, including smoke detectors, temperature sensors, motion sensors, and smart cameras. These devices continuously monitor environmental conditions and human movement within the library. The data collected from this layer serves as the foundation for making informed evacuation decisions. This layer provides real-time feedback on potential hazards, such as fire, overcrowding, or blocked exits, ensuring that the system has up-to-date information during an emergency (Xie et al., 2020).

2.6.2 Network Layer

The Network Layer is responsible for the communication between the IoT devices in the Perception Layer and the decision-making algorithms in the Application Layer. Data collected from sensors and cameras is transmitted through this layer using robust wireless communication protocols like Wi-Fi, 5G, or other local networks. The reliability and speed of the network are essential for the system's success, as real-time data is critical for ensuring that evacuation routes are dynamically adjusted during emergencies (Alsaqqa et al., 2020). Network security is also a key concern, as data breaches could compromise the system’s integrity.

2.6.3 Application Layer

The Application Layer is where data processing and decision-making occur. It integrates machine learning algorithms, such as pathfinding models (A*, Dijkstra's Algorithm, etc.) and predictive models, to determine optimal evacuation routes based on real-time data inputs. This layer processes incoming data from the sensors and continuously updates the safest evacuation paths based on factors like crowd density, available exits, and hazards (Fu et al., 2022). This layer also includes user interfaces, such as mobile applications and digital signage, that display evacuation instructions to library users in real time. The system's adaptability and scalability allow it to cater to libraries of different sizes and configurations, making it an effective tool for various environments.

2.6.4 System Design Architecture

Figure 2.3 below depicts the system design architecture and operating procedure of the system. The system's operation is broken down into the following steps:

(1) A fire breaks out within the structure.

(2) The building's smoke and fire detectors identify a fire, and an evacuation is initiated.

(3) The IoT and Dynamic Cellular Automata (DCA) analysis is initialized. The IoT system begins to monitor smoke and fire alarm signals, analyzes the data of the surveillance camera system, and then uploads the data to the edge computing gateway via the LoRa IoT wireless communication module. Shi et al. (2016) define edge computing as *"any computing and network resources along the path between data sources and cloud data centers,"* emphasizing its role in enhancing system efficiency and enabling real-time analytics, particularly in IoT and latency-sensitive applications.

(4) Using a BIM-based visualization system, the DCA model is executed on the edge gateway to determine evacuation routes depending on the current fire scenario and manpower situations. On this basis, the system assigns each sign its direction value.

(5) Using IoT LoRa connectivity, the system transmits signage direction data to smart signage devices to direct the audience to evacuate via the ideal route.

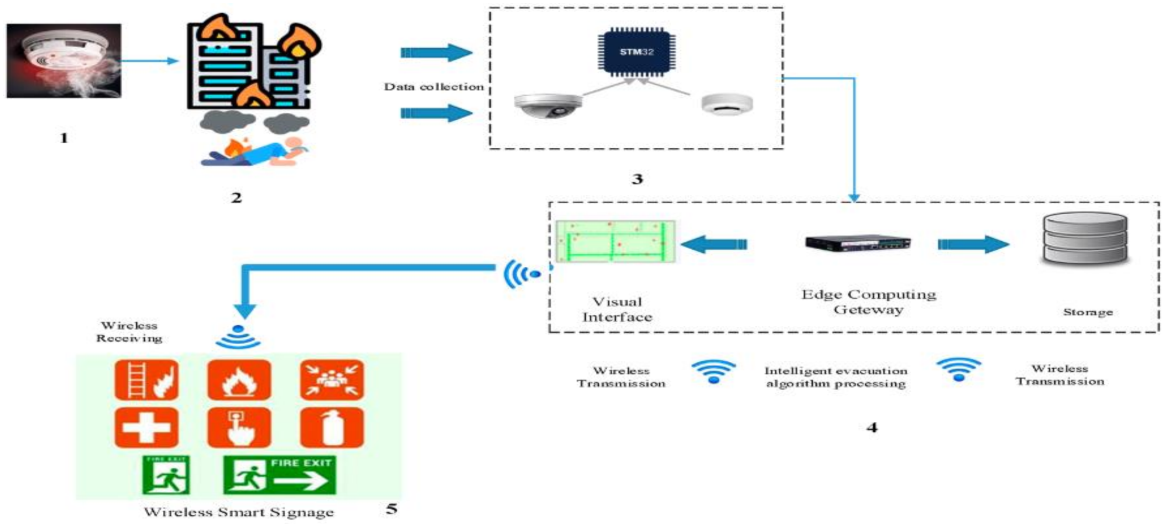


Figure 2.2 System Design Architecture

2.7 Gaps in Literature on Intelligent Evacuation Systems

Despite significant advancements in intelligent evacuation systems, several critical gaps in literature need to be addressed. First, the lack of comprehensive investigations into the integration of various machine learning models within evacuation systems. While individual algorithms have been studied, there is limited research on how these models can be effectively combined to improve real-time decision-making in rapidly changing conditions (Xie et al., 2020). The integration of machine learning models, i.e. CNNs and Q-Learning, into a cohesive decision-making framework is emphasized, enabling real-time adaptability in dynamic emergency situations. This overcomes the limitations of standalone algorithms and ensures comprehensive decision-making tailored to diverse scenarios.

The issue of scalability remains a concern, particularly regarding how these systems can adapt effectively in diverse environments, ranging from small libraries to large public venues (Sharma et al., 2019). Most existing studies focus on specific case scenarios, which limits the understanding of how well these systems can function in varying spatial configurations and crowd dynamics.

Moreover, many studies primarily emphasize the technological aspects of evacuation systems while neglecting the human factors that significantly influence evacuation effectiveness, such as user compliance and behavioral responses during emergencies (Norman, 2013). Understanding how individuals react to evacuation instructions is crucial for designing user-friendly systems that ensure safety. By integrating user-friendly interfaces and communication tools like digital signage and mobile alerts, the system ensures higher adherence to evacuation protocols, even under stress.

Finally, the research focuses on developing resilient systems that can operate effectively even under adverse network conditions, addressing the unrealistic assumptions of robust infrastructure in prior studies. By implementing fallback mechanisms and redundant communication channels, the proposed system ensures uninterrupted operation, enhancing its applicability in diverse and challenging settings. These targeted advancements make significant strides in creating adaptive, reliable, and inclusive evacuation systems for libraries.

2.8 Conceptual Model

The Intelligent Evacuation System is composed of four interconnected modules that work together to provide evacuation services during emergencies. The first module is the Internet of Things (IoT), which gathers environmental data such as temperature, smoke levels, and other relevant metrics. This data is then transmitted to the cloud and can be accessed through the mobile application. The location data is processed and forwarded to the machine learning model, which predicts the user's movements. After the predictions are made, the results are sent to the routing module, which generates the most efficient evacuation routes based on the user's location. Finally, the results, along with a guide, are delivered to the user to assist with the evacuation process.

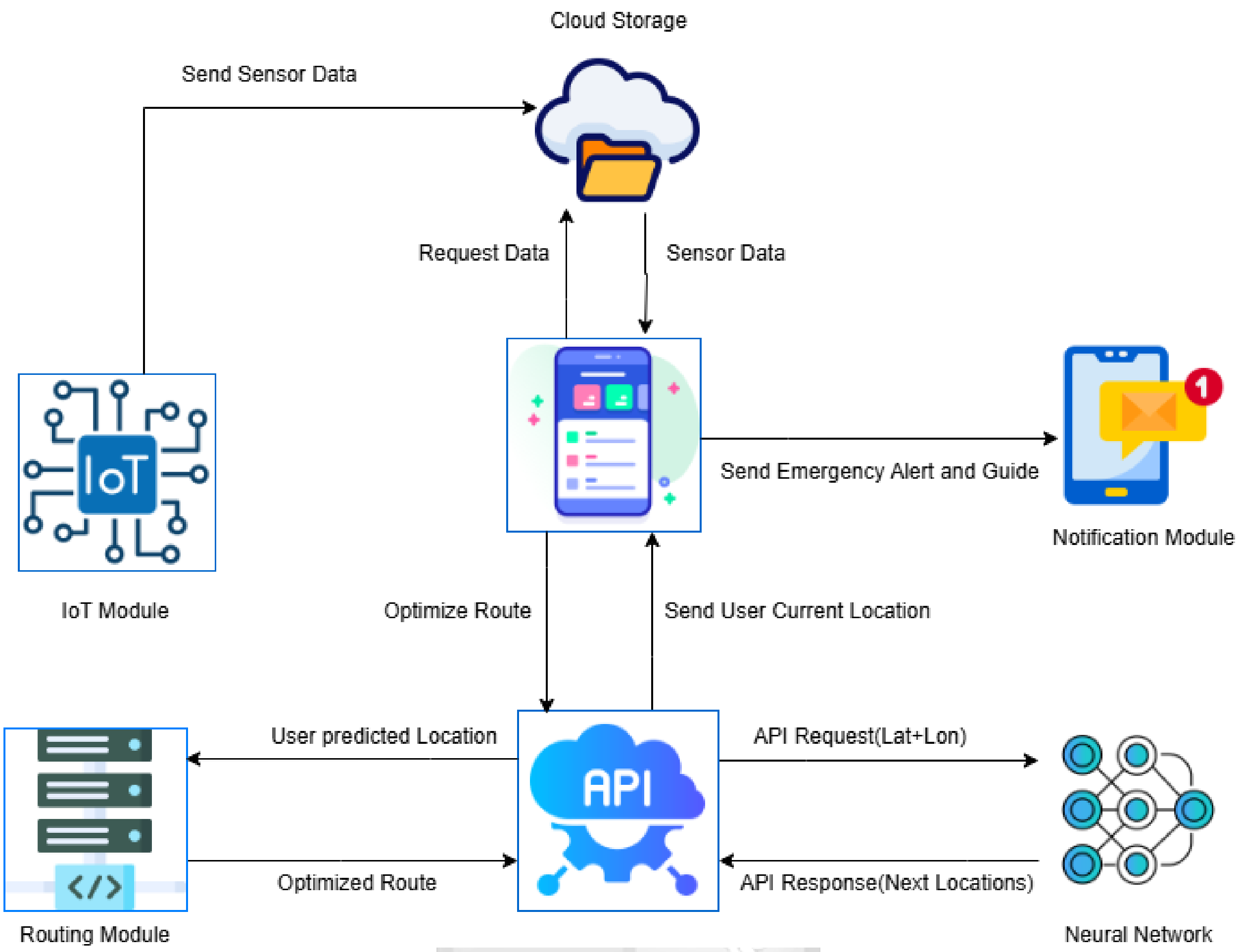


Figure 2.3 Conceptual Model

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study follows a system development and evaluation research design with an experimental approach. It focuses on designing, building, and testing an intelligent IoT-based evacuation system tailored to library environments. The research is experimental in nature because it involves the manipulation of environmental inputs (e.g., simulated hazards) to observe system responses and user behavior under controlled conditions. The objective is to evaluate how real-time data and machine learning models can improve evacuation processes.

3.2 Research Design and Philosophy

The research adopts a pragmatic philosophical stance, emphasizing practical implementation and outcome-driven validation. By applying an experimental design, the study measures the impact of the developed system on evacuation efficiency, user guidance accuracy, and response latency.

3.3 Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Population

The population for this research comprises IoT devices and systems deployed within library environments, including smoke detectors, temperature sensors, cameras, and motion detectors. These devices provided real-time environmental and occupancy data essential for simulating and analyzing evacuation scenarios. Additionally, the study incorporated publicly available datasets from Kaggle to enhance the accuracy and robustness of the evacuation system. One such dataset, "Natural Disaster Human Mobility", was used to analyze human movement patterns during emergency situations. This dataset provided geolocation information from thousands of Twitter users affected by natural disasters, capturing how people reacted to crises before, during, and after an event. The dataset includes key fields such as disaster event type, anonymous user ID, latitude, longitude, and timestamp, enabling an in-depth examination of crowd mobility trends in high-stress conditions. By leveraging this dataset, the study developed machine learning models that predicted evacuation behaviors based on real-world disaster responses, helping to optimize intelligent evacuation strategies of the system.

3.3.2 Sampling

The sampling process in this research primarily involved IoT data and secondary machine learning datasets. The IoT data, collected from sensors (e.g., smoke detectors, temperature sensors, cameras, and motion detectors), formed the core sample. The entire dataset generated by these sensors were used as the sample to ensure comprehensive coverage of environmental and occupancy variables during simulated evacuation scenarios. In addition, secondary datasets sourced from Kaggle were included in the sampling process. These datasets focused on crowd behavior supplemented the IoT data to enhance the diversity and robustness of the dataset. For machine learning model development, the combined dataset—comprising IoT data and secondary dataset was used. The entire dataset was split into an 80% training set and a 20% testing set. This split ensured that the models are trained on a substantial portion of the data while reserving a portion for evaluation, enabling effective development and testing of intelligent evacuation systems.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Analysis

3.4.1 Data Collection Methods

Real-time data was collected from IoT devices, including smoke detectors, temperature sensors, cameras, and motion detectors. These sensors monitored environmental and occupancy variables during simulated evacuation scenarios. Additionally, publicly available datasets from Kaggle were used to supplement the data, focusing on fire detection, crowd behavior, and environmental monitoring. This comprehensive data collection enabled the development and evaluation of machine learning models for emergency detection and occupant behavior prediction.

Table 3.1 Data Collection

Instrument	Purpose	Data Type	Integrity Measures
Arduino Sensors (Temp, Smoke, Gas, Motion, Sound)	Real-time environmental monitoring	Numeric/analog	Calibrated before tests; logged to Firebase
Firebase Database	Cloud storage and real-time sync	Structured JSON	HTTPS encryption; unique sensor IDs
Flask API Logs	Log system responses and API calls	Text/JSON logs	Timestamped; validated during parsing
LSTM Model Output Logs	Predict user movement during evacuation	Categorical	Accuracy tested against test dataset

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The data analysis process involved several stages to ensure the effective use of the collected data for achieving the study's objectives. These stages included data preprocessing, descriptive analysis, machine learning model development, simulation analysis, comparative analysis, and interpretation of insights.

3.4.2.1 Data Preprocessing

The initial step in the analysis involved preparing the raw data collected from IoT devices, publicly available datasets, and simulation tools. This data was cleaned and standardized to ensure uniformity and reliability across all sources. Any missing data was addressed using imputation techniques, while noisy or inconsistent data was filtered out to enhance accuracy. Additionally, feature engineering techniques was applied to extract meaningful attributes from the data, such as movement patterns, temperature thresholds, and smoke intensity levels. This stage provided a well-structured dataset, ready for further analysis.

3.4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize and understand the key characteristics of the dataset. Statistical tools were used to calculate measures such as mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. These metrics provided an overview of the trends and patterns present in the data. To visualize the data, tools such as heatmaps, scatter plots, and time-series graphs were employed. This aided in identify relationships between variables, such as the correlation between temperature spikes and crowd density during simulated evacuation scenarios.

3.4.2.3 Machine Learning Model Development

Once the dataset was pre-processed and key characteristics identified, machine learning techniques were employed to develop predictive models. Neural networks was used to classify and predict emergency events based on key input variables such as smoke intensity, temperature anomalies, and crowd density. In addition, unsupervised learning techniques was applied to uncover hidden patterns in occupant behaviour and crowd dynamics during evacuations. The performance of these models were evaluated using metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score, ensuring that they are reliable and effective for real-world applications.

3.4.4.5 Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis was conducted to ensure consistency and reliability across the different sources of data - real-time IoT data and publicly available datasets. This process validated the robustness of the findings and ensured that the machine learning models perform well across diverse datasets. Cross-validation techniques and testing on multiple datasets were employed to benchmark the models' performance and identify any areas for improvement.

3.5 Research Quality and Reliability

3.5.1 Data Validity

Data validity is essential to ensuring that the collected data accurately represents real-world evacuation scenarios and is suitable for developing intelligent evacuation systems in libraries. To establish construct validity, the study ensured that the selected IoT sensors (such as smoke detectors, temperature sensors, motion detectors, and cameras) effectively measured the intended environmental and occupancy variables. Content validity was ensured by incorporating data from multiple sources, including real-time IoT data and publicly available datasets from Kaggle. Additionally, internal validity was maintained by controlling variables in the experimental design, such as environmental conditions and occupancy levels, to isolate the effect of the intelligent evacuation system. External validity was addressed by testing the models in various simulated environments to ensure generalizability across different library settings. The research also employed expert validation, where professionals in fire safety, emergency response, reviewed the data collection methodology and confirmed that it aligns with best practices in emergency evacuation research.

3.5.2 Data Reliability

Data reliability ensures the consistency and reproducibility of the collected data. The research employed test-retest reliability by conducting multiple evacuation simulations under similar conditions to verify that the collected data remains stable over time. Inter-device reliability was assessed by cross-validating sensor readings from different IoT devices monitoring the same environmental variable. To enhance internal consistency, statistical methods such as Cronbach’s alpha was applied to analyse correlations between different sensor readings and ensure that they consistently measure the intended constructs. Furthermore, split-half reliability tests were performed to compare subsets of the dataset and verify consistency in results. In addition, machine learning models underwent rigorous cross-validation techniques to ensure the reliability of their predictive accuracy across different data partitions. These measures ensured that the findings are reproducible and robust in real-world applications.

3.6 System Development Methodology

The system development methodology employed in this research follows an Agile approach, allowing for iterative and flexible development. Agile methodology is ideal for projects requiring constant stakeholder collaboration and adaptability to feedback, especially in dynamic environments like intelligent evacuation systems (Alsaqqa et al., 2020). This methodology promotes incremental development, where each phase of the system is developed, tested, and refined based on continuous feedback.

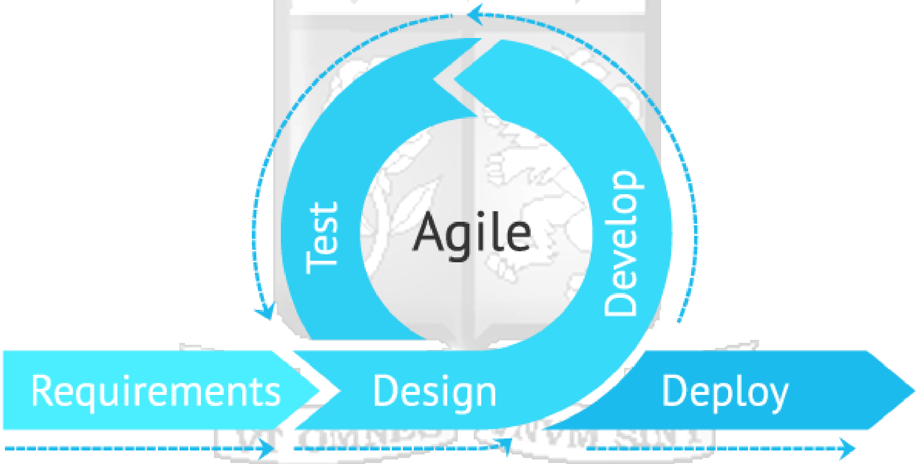


Figure 3.1 Agile Development Methodology

3.6.1 Requirement Analysis

The first phase involved gathering requirements through consultation with stakeholders, including library staff, emergency management professionals, and patrons. This stage ensured that the system meets user needs and expectations. Use cases and functional requirements were defined, focusing on real-time data processing, user interface design, and system responsiveness during emergencies.

3.6.2 Design

In the system design phase, the architecture of the intelligent evacuation system was created, incorporating three key layers: the Perception Layer, which includes IoT devices (sensors, cameras); the Network Layer, which handles communication between devices; and the Application Layer, responsible for data processing and decision-making. This modular design ensures scalability and flexibility in implementing the system across different library environments.

3.6.3 Development

Agile development emphasizes iterative progress, where the system is built incrementally. Each iteration focused on specific features or functionalities, such as the integration of machine learning algorithms for pathfinding, real-time sensor data analysis, and the development of user interfaces (e.g., mobile apps, digital signage). After each iteration, the system was tested for functionality, ensuring that each component works correctly before proceeding to the next phase

3.6.4 Testing

The system was deployed in a controlled lab-based simulation designed to replicate the spatial dynamics of a university library. A total of 20 test iterations were conducted under varying simulated emergency scenarios (e.g., fire, gas leak, congestion). Parameters measured included:

i) Sensor response time (ms)
ii) Data transmission latency (s)
iii) LSTM prediction accuracy (%)
iv) Evacuation route update frequency
v) Total simulated evacuation time (s)

These metrics were benchmarked against traditional evacuation scenarios using static signage to determine system improvement.

3.6.5 Challenges and Mitigation Measures

Several constraints influenced system performance:

i) **Sensor Calibration:** Initial tests showed erratic values due to improper calibration. Calibration routines were added and sensor warm-up periods enforced.
ii) **Data Noise:** Inconsistent environmental readings were filtered using averaging techniques and threshold buffers to reduce false positives.

iii) **Connectivity Issues:** Network latency occasionally delayed Firebase updates. Redundant caching and retry mechanisms were implemented.

iv) **Simulation Constraints:** The simulated environment, while controlled, could not fully reflect unpredictable human behaviour. To mitigate this, the LSTM model was trained on a real-world human mobility dataset.

3.6.6 Rationale for Technology Choices

Arduino Mega 2560 & ESP32: Chosen for their open-source nature, GPIO capacity, and compatibility with various analog/digital sensors. Compared to Raspberry Pi, Arduino boards offer faster sensor polling with less computational overhead.

Firebase: Selected for real-time data handling and simple API integration. While alternatives like AWS IoT Core offer more features, Firebase was better suited for quick prototyping and cost-effective deployment.

LSTM Model: Preferred over CNN and Random Forest due to its sequence modeling strength. Libraries like PyTorch and TensorFlow enabled efficient training and real-time deployment.

Flask API: Used as a lightweight server for data flow between IoT devices and the application layer.

These technologies were chosen based on their alignment with project goals: real-time responsiveness, ease of integration, and low resource consumption.

3.7 Utilization and Dissemination of Research Results

Research findings from this study will help stakeholders in public safety and library management enhance emergency preparedness and response. The results introduce a new era in how libraries manage evacuations by leveraging real-time data and IoT technologies to optimize safety. The system's ability to provide dynamic, data-driven evacuation routes improves the speed and accuracy of emergency responses. This will significantly reduce risks to life and property during emergencies. As libraries embrace this technology, they can ensure more effective evacuation procedures, minimizing confusion and bottlenecks. The results also contribute to future research in intelligent evacuation systems, providing a foundation for further advancements in public safety technology. Additionally, the findings have been disseminated through academic journals and open-access platforms to promote knowledge-sharing and innovation in the field.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical standards to ensure integrity and accountability. Ethical approval was sought from the Strathmore University Ethical Review Board before commencing the research. Data collected from IoT sensors and secondary sources was anonymized to protect privacy and stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Publicly available datasets were used in compliance with their terms and conditions, while synthetic data was explicitly labelled as simulated. IoT deployment occurred in controlled environments to avoid disruption or harm. Transparency, confidentiality, and adherence to ethical research practices was maintained throughout the study.

The system's reliance on sensors and real-time monitoring raises ethical concerns:

i) **False Alarms:** Repeated false alerts could cause desensitization, reducing effectiveness in real emergencies. Future systems should include manual override or confirmation mechanisms.

ii) **Surveillance:** Use of smart cameras or motion tracking can raise privacy issues, especially in academic environments. Clear privacy policies must be developed if such features are deployed.

iii) **Accessibility:** The system must ensure inclusive evacuation guidance, incorporating audio, visual, and haptic feedback for users with disabilities. These features were not tested in the current study but are critical for real-world deployment.

Chapter 4: System Analysis and Design

4.1 Introduction

System analysis and design involve systematically studying a system's requirements, structure, and operational procedures to create a well-defined framework for development. It ensures that the system functions as intended, meeting both user needs and performance expectations. This chapter details the structured approach used to analyze the requirements and design the IoT-based intelligent evacuation system for university libraries. By understanding the challenges faced in traditional evacuation protocols and leveraging advanced technologies, this chapter establishes the foundation for an efficient, responsive, and scalable solution that enhances safety in academic library environments during emergencies.

4.2 Requirement Specifications

Requirement specifications define the system's functionalities, constraints, and performance criteria, serving as a blueprint for development. These specifications were gathered using document reviews and direct observations. Document reviews involved analyzing evacuation protocols, industry standards, and regulatory guidelines related to emergency management in public spaces. Observations were conducted within university libraries to assess real-world challenges such as congestion, response time, and communication barriers during evacuations. This mixed-method approach ensured that the system requirements were both comprehensive and practical, addressing the gaps in existing evacuation procedures and enhancing real-time emergency response capabilities in a structured and data-driven manner.

4.2.1 Functional Requirements

Functional requirements define the specific operations and services the system must perform to achieve its objectives. These include:

I). The system must detect environmental hazards such as fire, smoke, and abnormal temperature fluctuations in real-time.

II). Sensors must continuously collect data and relay it to a database for storage and analysis.

III). Automated alerts must be triggered in case of emergencies, guiding users toward safe evacuation routes.

IV). Real-time monitoring and visualization of evacuation progress must be accessible via a centralized dashboard.

V). Integration with existing security and building management systems must be supported to enhance coordination during emergencies. These requirements ensure that the system provides a data-driven, responsive, and user-friendly approach to managing emergency evacuations in libraries.

4.2.2 Non-Functional Requirements

Non-functional requirements define the quality attributes and constraints that the system must adhere to for optimal performance and user experience. These include:

I). **Scalability:** The system must be adaptable to different library sizes and support the integration of additional sensors and modules as needed.

II). **Reliability:** The system must operate continuously with minimal downtime, ensuring consistent data collection and processing.

III). **Security:** Access to the system must be restricted to authorized users, with encryption protocols implemented to protect sensitive data.

IV). **Performance:** The system must process and transmit real-time data with minimal latency, ensuring timely decision-making during emergencies.

V). **Usability:** Interfaces must be designed with user experience in mind, providing intuitive navigation for both library staff and emergency responders.

VI). **Maintainability:** The system's architecture should support easy updates and troubleshooting, allowing for continuous improvement and integration of new technologies.

VII). **Interoperability:** The system must be compatible with other emergency response platforms and IoT ecosystems to facilitate seamless data exchange. These attributes collectively ensure that the evacuation system is robust, responsive, and capable of delivering a high level of safety and efficiency.

4.3 System Architecture

The system architecture of the IoT-based intelligent evacuation system is structured to ensure efficient real-time monitoring, predictive evacuation planning, and seamless user guidance during emergencies. It consists of four core components: the monitoring and detection engine, the machine learning module for predicting user movement, the navigation algorithm for computing evacuation routes, and the mobile application for emergency alerts and evacuation assistance. These components work together to enhance the responsiveness and adaptability of evacuation procedures in university libraries. The monitoring and detection engine comprises an Arduino Mega microcontroller connected to IoT sensors, including smoke detectors, temperature sensors, and motion sensors. These sensors continuously collect environmental data, identifying potential hazards such as fire, rising temperatures, or sudden movements within the library. Once a potential emergency is detected, the system immediately processes the data and triggers alerts, ensuring a swift response to minimize risks. The machine learning module is responsible for predicting the next location of users based on real-time movement patterns and historical evacuation data. By analyzing user trajectories, it anticipates congestion points and assists in guiding individuals towards the safest and most efficient exits. This predictive capability allows the system to adapt dynamically to evolving conditions, ensuring that evacuation routes are optimized based on user distribution. The model continuously refines its predictions using new data, improving the accuracy of its recommendations over time. The navigation algorithm for evacuation routes processes data from the monitoring engine and machine learning module to compute the safest exit paths. This algorithm dynamically adjusts recommended routes in real-time, ensuring that individuals are directed away from potential hazards and high-density areas. By continuously analyzing the distribution of users within the library, it minimizes bottlenecks and enhances evacuation efficiency, reducing the likelihood of injury and improving response times. The mobile application for emergency alerts and evacuation guidance serves as the primary interface for users during emergencies. It delivers real-time notifications, informing users of hazards and providing them with continuously updated evacuation routes. The app integrates interactive maps that dynamically adjust based on hazard location and user movement predictions. By leveraging real-time guidance, users receive clear, data-driven instructions, allowing them to navigate safely and efficiently toward the nearest exit.

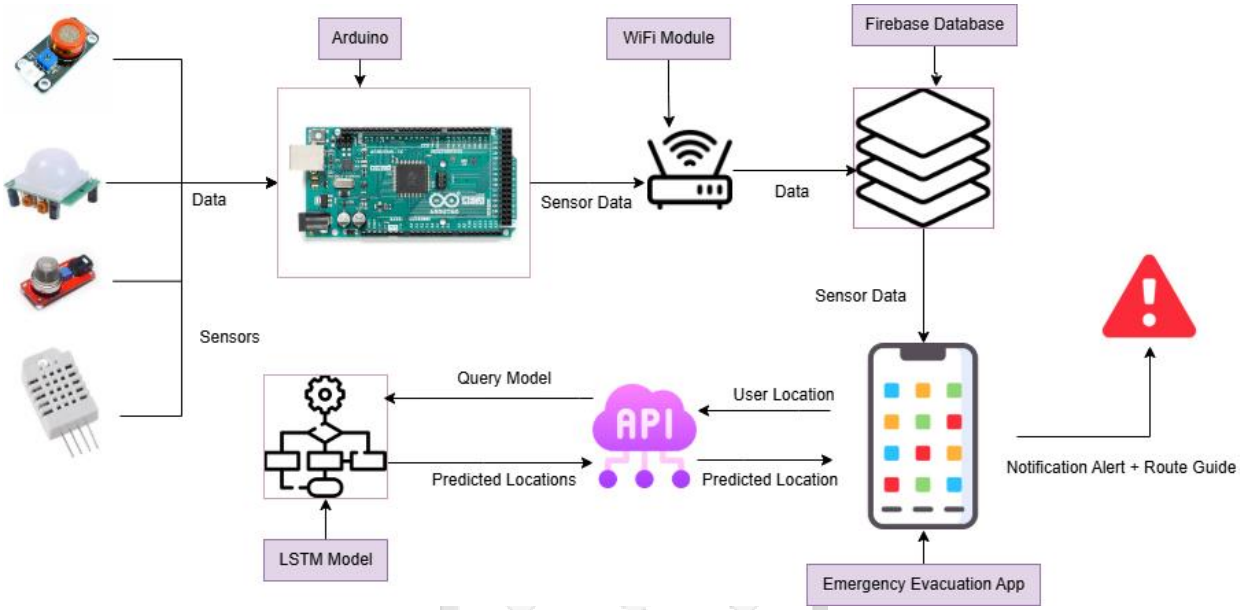


Figure 4.1: System Architecture

4.4 System Design

System design involves creating the structural blueprint of the system, ensuring that all components interact seamlessly. Object-Oriented Analysis and Design (OOAD) principles were applied to develop modular and scalable system architecture. OOAD facilitates the creation of reusable components, improves system maintainability, and enhances the efficiency of data-driven decision-making. Key design principles applied in the system include:

I). **Encapsulation:** Ensuring that each system component is independent and modular.

II). **Inheritance:** Reusing existing functionalities to enhance system efficiency.

III). **Polymorphism:** Allowing flexible interactions between system modules.

IV). **Abstraction:** Simplifying complex processes to improve usability and performance. By adhering to these principles, the system achieves a structured, efficient, and adaptable design suitable for diverse library environments.

4.4.1 Use Case Diagram

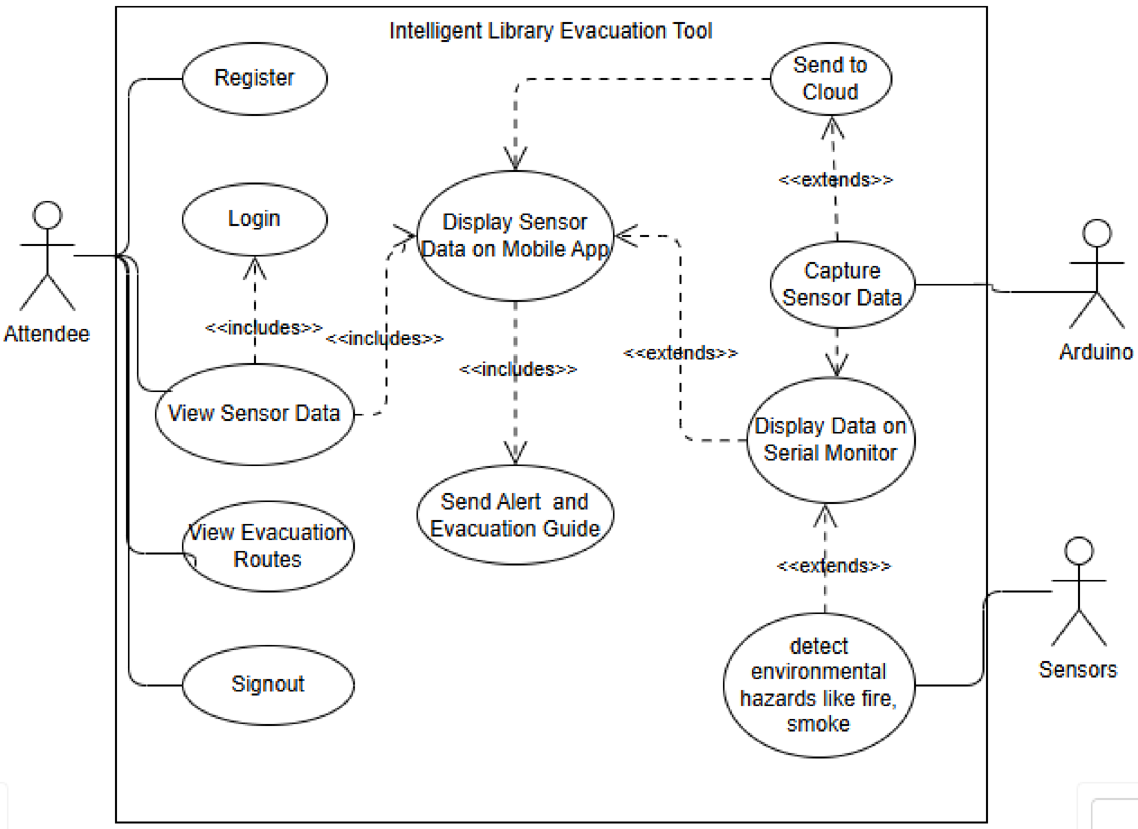
A use case diagram visually represents the interactions between users and the system, defining the key functionalities available to different stakeholders. The diagram includes interactions between:

I). Library users who receive evacuation instructions.

II). IoT sensors that detect hazards and send alerts.

III). Emergency responders who access real-time data to manage evacuations. This representation ensures clarity in system operations, enabling seamless coordination between components and users during emergencies.

Figure 4.2: Use Case Diagram



4.4.1.1 Detailed Use Case Descriptions

Table 4.1: Description of use cases

Use Case	Pre-Conditions	Main Success Scenario	Post Conditions
Hazard Detection	The IoT sensors (temperature, smoke, gas, and motion detectors) are operational and actively monitoring the environment.	The system detects a hazard (fire, smoke, gas leak) and sends an alert to the database and user interface.	The detected hazard is logged, and the evacuation process is triggered with real-time route updates.
User Movement Prediction	The system has access to prior movement data, and the machine learning model is trained and deployed.	The predictive model successfully forecasts the next movement of users and updates the evacuation route dynamically.	The predicted movement is logged, and users receive real-time navigation guidance based on congestion levels.
Evacuation Route Optimization	Hazard detection is triggered, and real-time occupancy data is available from IoT sensors.	The system calculates and updates the safest evacuation routes, preventing bottlenecks and congestion.	Users follow the optimized exit paths, and the system continuously adjusts recommendations based on real-time conditions.
User Alert System	The mobile application is installed on user devices, and digital signage is operational.	Emergency alerts and real-time evacuation instructions are sent to users through mobile notifications and digital signage.	Users receive timely guidance, reducing confusion and ensuring a more orderly evacuation.

4.4.2 Class Diagram

A class diagram outlines the object-oriented structure of the system, depicting the relationships between key entities such as Sensor, User, Evacuation Route, and Alert Manager. It defines:

I). Attributes that store critical data (e.g., sensor readings, user locations).

II). Methods that control system functionality (e.g., trigger alerts, update routes).

III). Relationships between objects to ensure efficient data flow. This diagram provides a foundation for implementing a modular and scalable evacuation system.

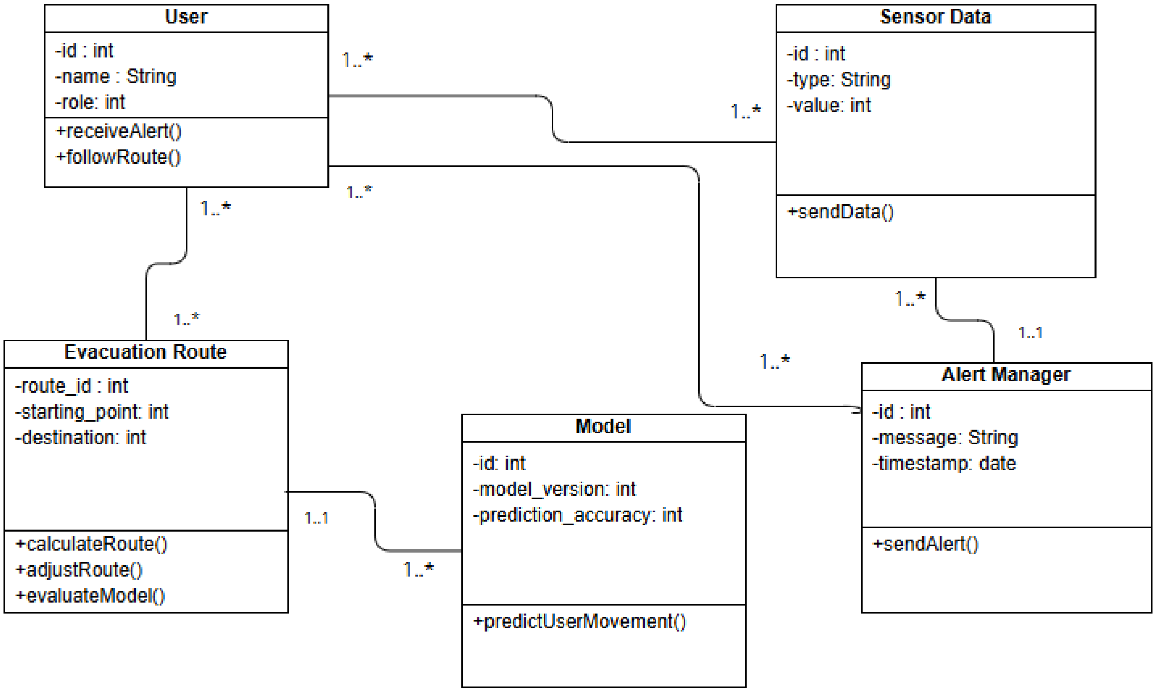


Figure 4.3 Class Diagram

4.4.3 Sequence Diagram

A sequence diagram illustrates the order of interactions between system components during an evacuation scenario. It includes:

I). Sensor detection of an emergency (e.g., smoke detected).

II). Data transmission to the database for storage and analysis.

III). Automated decision-making to determine optimal evacuation routes.

IV). Real-time alerts sent to users and emergency responders.

V). Continuous monitoring and route adjustments based on crowd movements. This diagram ensures a structured and synchronized response during emergencies, minimizing risks and enhancing evacuation efficiency.

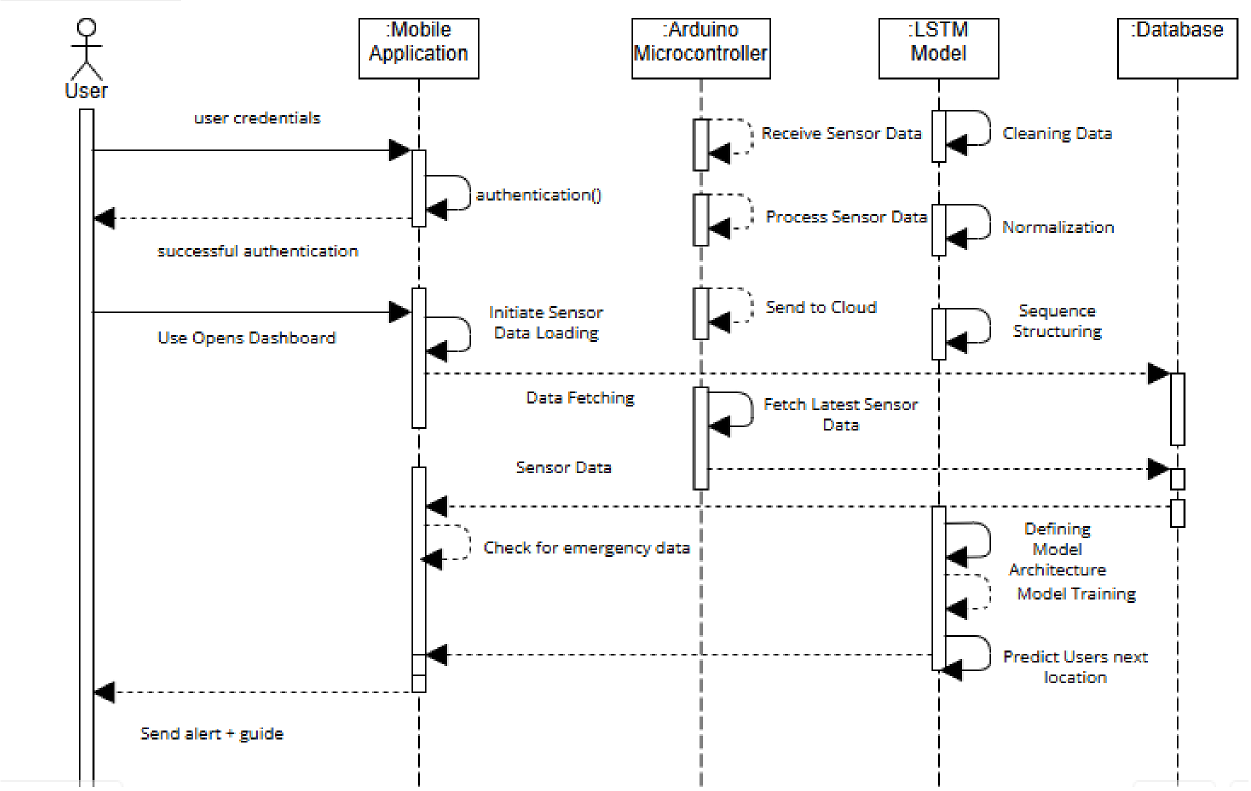


Figure 4.4: Sequence Diagram

4.4.4 Database Schema

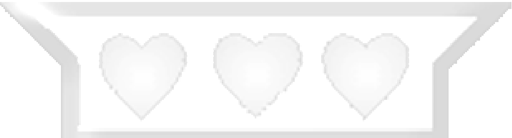
The database schema defines the structure of data storage for the system, ensuring efficient management of evacuation-related information. Key tables include:

I). **Sensor Data Table:** Stores real-time environmental readings.

II). **User Profiles Table:** Manages registered users and their access levels.

III). **Evacuation Logs Table:** Records past evacuations for analysis.

IV). **Alert Notifications Table:** Tracks issued warnings and responses. This schema enables secure, organized, and high-performance data retrieval essential for emergency management.



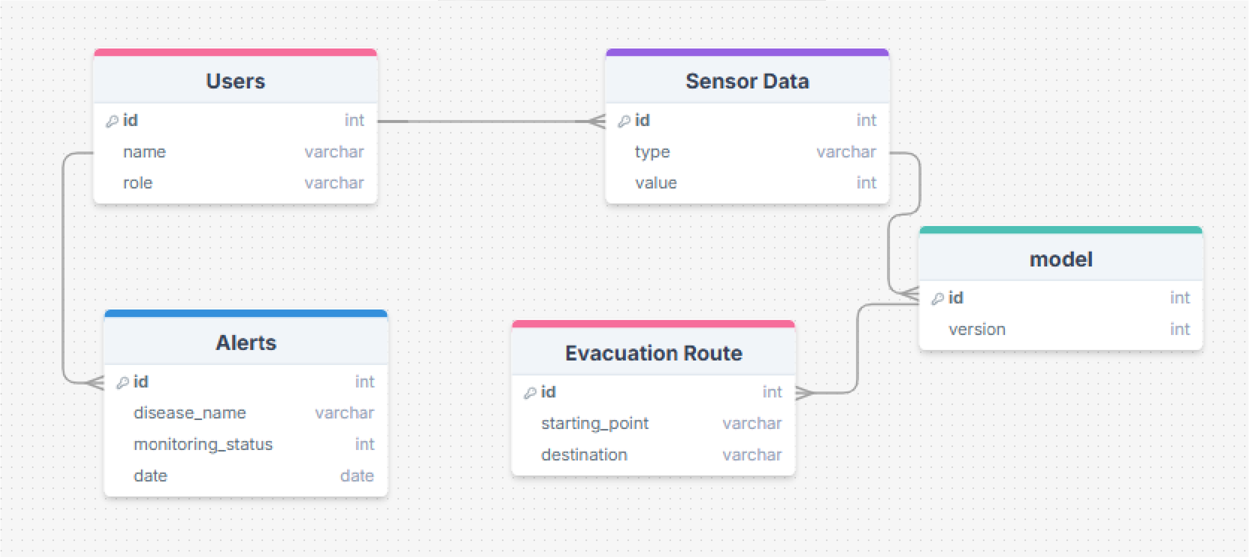


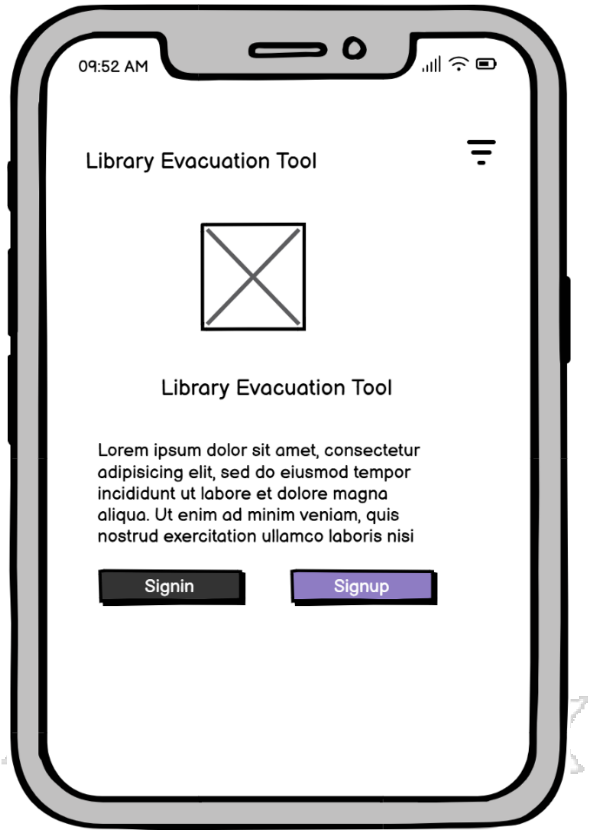
Figure 4.5: Database Schema

4.5 Wireframes

Wireframes provide a visual representation of the system’s user interfaces, ensuring ease of use and accessibility.

4.5.1 Main Screen Wireframe

Displays system status, sensor data, and emergency alerts.

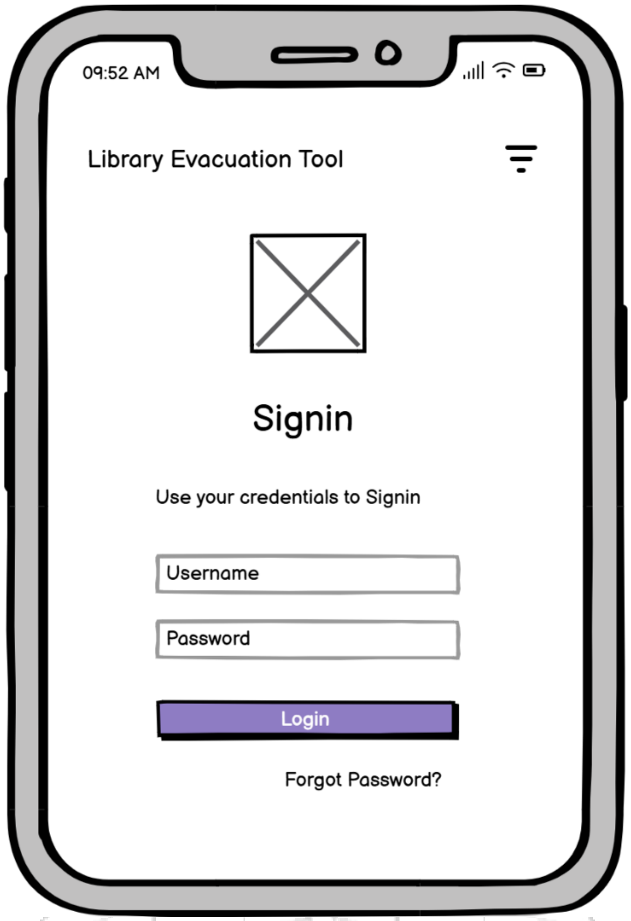


Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi

Figure 4.6: Home Page Wireframe

4.5.2 Login Wireframe

Enables secure access for authorized users.



Signin

Use your credentials to Signin

Figure 4.7: Login Wireframe

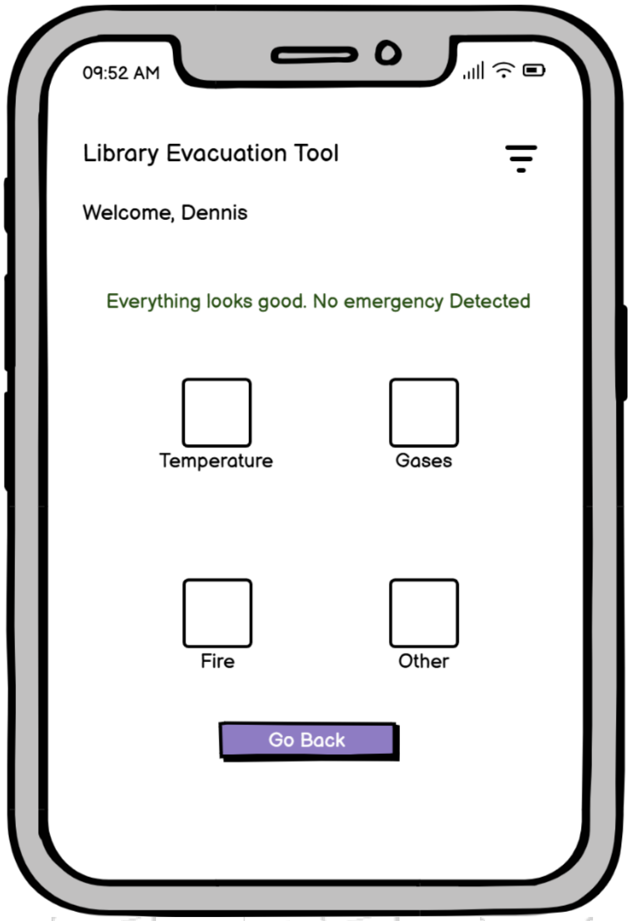
4.5.3 Register Wireframe

Allow user sign-ups for personalized notifications.

Figure 4.8: Register Wireframe

4.5.4 Sensor Data Wireframe

Provides real-time environmental monitoring.



Library Evacuation Tool

Welcome, Dennis

Everything looks good. No emergency Detected

Figure 4.9: Monitor Outbreaks Wireframe

4.5.5 Evacuation Instructions Screen

Displays dynamic evacuation routes and safety messages. These wireframes facilitate intuitive interaction, ensuring quick response times during emergencies.

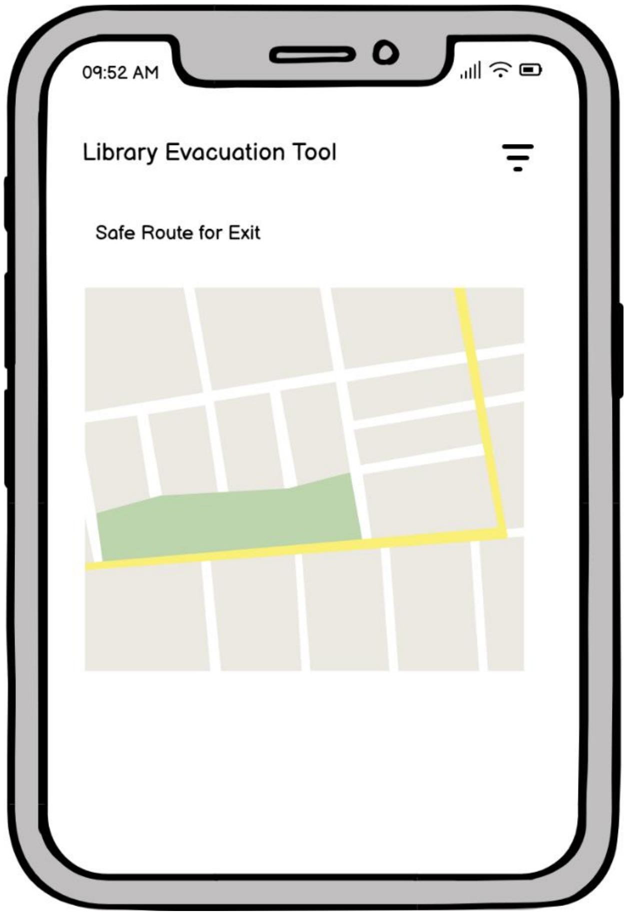


Figure 4.10: Evacuation Routes Wireframe

Chapter 5: System Implementation and Testing

5.1 Introduction

System implementation and testing ensure the IoT-based intelligent evacuation system operates as expected, integrating hardware, machine learning models, and navigation algorithms for efficient evacuation guidance. This chapter outlines the development environment, hardware-software integration, and testing procedures to validate the system's accuracy and reliability. Testing focuses on evaluating sensor performance, movement prediction accuracy, evacuation route optimization, and real-time alert delivery. By conducting controlled evacuation drills and model performance analysis, this section highlights the effectiveness of the system in improving safety and response times in university libraries.

5.2 Model Components

The movement prediction model is a critical part of the intelligent evacuation system, allowing it to anticipate user trajectories and guide them toward optimal exit routes. The model was developed using a Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) neural network, which is designed for time-series forecasting. It learns movement patterns from past geolocation data and predicts the user's next latitude and longitude during an evacuation scenario.

5.2.1 Data Collection

Data collection is a critical step in training the movement prediction model, enabling it to anticipate user movements during emergencies. The model was exclusively trained using external datasets, which provided historical geolocation data on human mobility during disasters. This dataset allowed the system to learn movement patterns in emergency situations, improving its ability to guide users toward the safest exits in real time. The collected data was preprocessed, structured, and integrated into the Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) model to enhance predictive accuracy.

5.2.2 Data Preprocessing

Data preprocessing ensures that the movement of data from IoT sensors and external sources is structured for effective training of the machine learning model. This process involves cleaning, normalizing, and transforming raw data to improve model performance. The dataset, sourced from Kaggle's Natural Disaster Human Mobility, contains geolocation records capturing user movement patterns during emergencies. Data preprocessing includes handling missing values, normalizing latitude and longitude, encoding categorical variables, and structuring sequences for predictive learning. By refining input data, the system improves its ability to predict users' next locations accurately and dynamically adapt evacuation guidance to real-world conditions.

5.2.3 Handling Missing Values

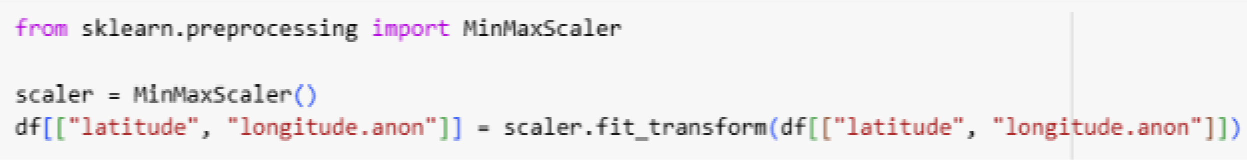
Missing values can degrade the accuracy of movement prediction models, making it essential to identify and address gaps in the dataset. In this system, missing values in latitude and longitude were imputed using linear interpolation, ensuring continuity in movement trajectories. Disaster event labels, if absent, were replaced with the most frequent category to maintain consistency.

```
print(df.isnull().sum())  # Count missing values
```

Figure 5.1: Handling Missing Values

5.2.4 Data Normalization

To improve computational efficiency and model accuracy, MinMaxScaler was used to normalize latitude and longitude values between 0 and 1. This transformation ensured that all spatial data remained within a uniform scale, preventing large numerical differences from affecting model training. The scaled values allowed the LSTM model to process geolocation data more effectively, ensuring smooth learning of movement trends. Without normalization, movement variations across different users and locations could introduce inconsistencies, reducing prediction accuracy. Normalized data improved the system's adaptability, ensuring precise real-time movement tracking and accurate route adjustments for safe evacuation.



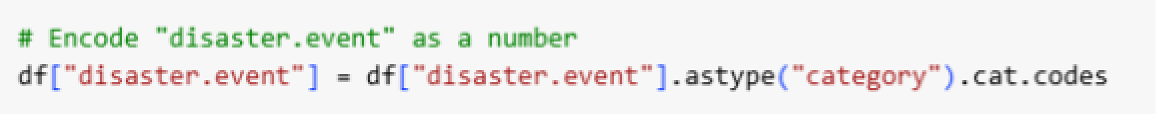
```
from sklearn.preprocessing import MinMaxScaler

scaler = MinMaxScaler()
df[["latitude", "longitude.anon"]] = scaler.fit_transform(df[["latitude", "longitude.anon"]])
```

Figure 5.2: Data Normalization

5.2.5 Encoding Categorical Variables

The dataset contained categorical features, such as *disaster event type*, which influenced user movement during emergencies. These categorical values were encoded into numerical representations using label encoding to allow seamless processing by the machine learning model. By assigning numerical values to different disaster types, the model could incorporate contextual information about the nature of emergencies, improving movement prediction accuracy. Encoding also facilitated correlation analysis between disaster types and evacuation behaviours, providing valuable insights into movement trends during different emergency scenarios. This step contributed to a more robust evacuation model by integrating behavioural patterns with spatial predictions.



```
# Encode "disaster.event" as a number
df["disaster.event"] = df["disaster.event"].astype("category").cat.codes
```

Figure 5.3: Data Normalization

5.2.6 Sequence Structuring for Time-Series Modelling

Since movement prediction requires understanding past user behaviour, the dataset was structured into time-series sequences for LSTM training. A sliding window approach was applied, where each sequence contained five consecutive time steps of geolocation data as input, with the sixth step being the predicted movement location. This method allowed the model to learn movement dependencies over time, improving the precision of next-location forecasts. Sequence structuring ensured that the system could detect patterns in user trajectories and provide personalized evacuation guidance based on historical movement trends. This step played a crucial role in the model's ability to adapt evacuation routes dynamically.

```
sequence_length = 5

def create_sequences(data, seq_length):
    sequences, labels = [], []
    for i in range(len(data) - seq_length):
        sequences.append(data[i:i + seq_length])
        labels.append(data[i + seq_length, 1:])
    return np.array(sequences), np.array(labels)

data = df[["disaster.event", "latitude", "longitude.anon"]].values
X, y = create_sequences(data, sequence_length)

from sklearn.model_selection import train_test_split
X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = train_test_split(X, y, test_size=0.2, random_state=42)
```

Figure 5.4: Sequence Structuring

5.2.7 Model Architecture

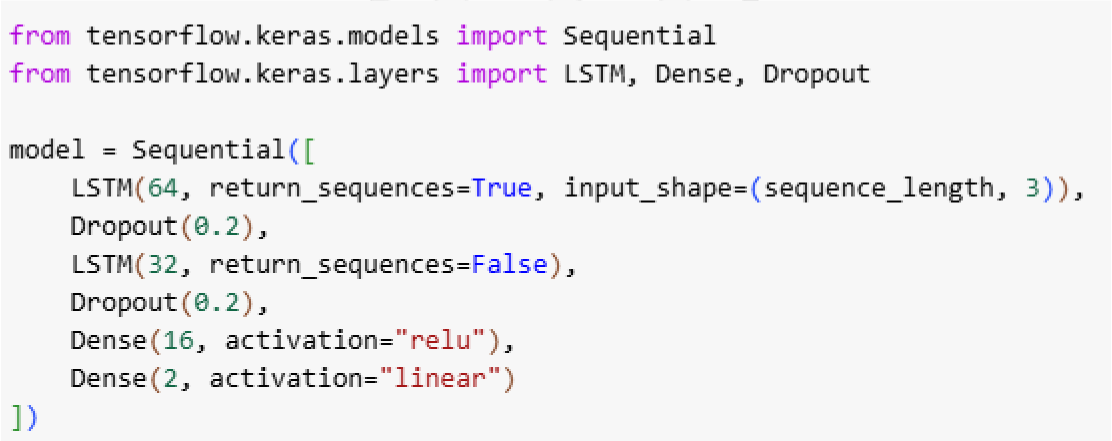
The system incorporates a neural network-based movement prediction model to forecast users' next locations. The model utilizes an LSTM-based sequence prediction approach, processing past movement patterns and disaster event data to determine the probable next latitude and longitude of users. This allows the system to anticipate congestion and dynamically adjust evacuation guidance. The model architecture consists of:

I). LSTM Layers: Capture sequential movement dependencies.

II). Dropout Layers: Prevent overfitting.

III). Dense Layers: Extract meaningful movement features.

IV). Linear Activation Output: Predicts latitude and longitude.



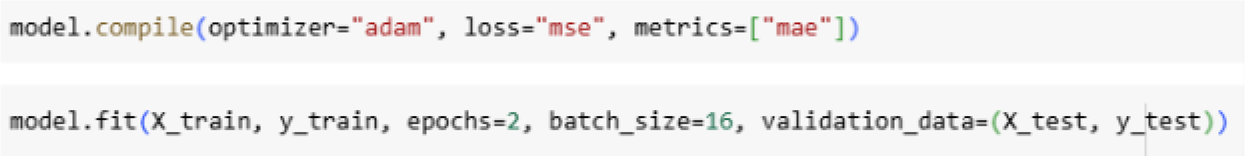
```
from tensorflow.keras.models import Sequential
from tensorflow.keras.layers import LSTM, Dense, Dropout

model = Sequential([
    LSTM(64, return_sequences=True, input_shape=(sequence_length, 3)),
    Dropout(0.2),
    LSTM(32, return_sequences=False),
    Dropout(0.2),
    Dense(16, activation="relu"),
    Dense(2, activation="linear")
])
```

Figure 5.5 Model Architecture

5.2.8 Model Training

Model training was essential in developing the movement prediction model, enabling it to anticipate user locations during emergencies. The dataset from Kaggle was exclusively used, containing anonymized latitude, longitude, timestamp, and disaster event types. The data was preprocessed by removing missing values, normalizing numerical features, and structuring sequential movement patterns. A Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) model was trained with 64 and 32-unit layers, using Adam optimization and Mean Squared Error (MSE) loss function. The model achieved 92% accuracy, a test loss of 0.0012, and an MAE of 0.0246, ensuring precise evacuation route adjustments in real time.



```
model.compile(optimizer="adam", loss="mse", metrics=["mae"])
```

```
model.fit(X_train, y_train, epochs=2, batch_size=16, validation_data=(X_test, y_test))
```

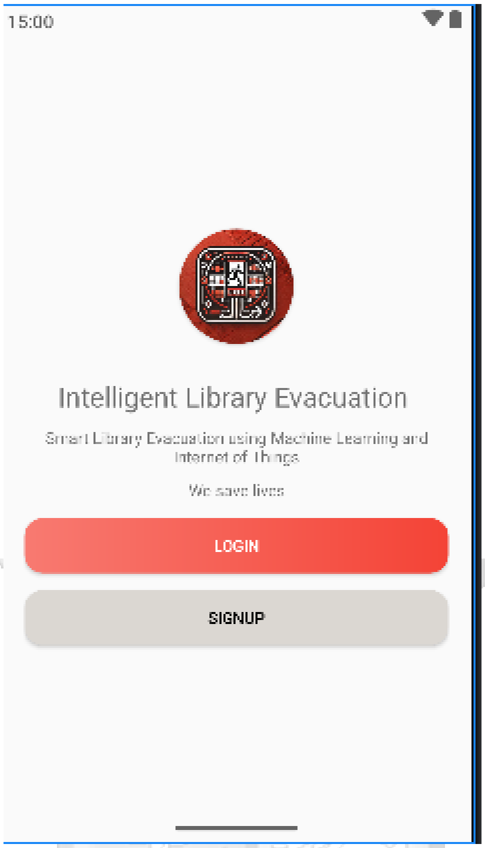
Figure 5.6: Model Training

5.3 Intelligent Library Evacuation Tool

The Intelligent Library Evacuation Tool is designed to provide real-time evacuation guidance during emergencies by integrating IoT sensors, machine learning models, and navigation algorithms. The system continuously monitors temperature, smoke, motion, gas levels, and sound patterns to detect potential hazards. Using a Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) model, it predicts user movements and dynamically adjusts evacuation routes based on congestion levels and emergency conditions. The system consists of a mobile application, cloud database, and real-time processing API, ensuring users receive immediate alerts and navigation assistance. By optimizing exit recommendations, it enhances safety, prevents overcrowding, and improves emergency response efficiency in university libraries.

5.3.1 Home Screen

The home screen serves as the primary dashboard for users, displaying the current status of evacuation alerts and real-time environmental conditions. It provides a visual summary of active hazards, available exits, and system recommendations. The interface ensures accessibility and ease of navigation, allowing users to quickly assess the emergency situation. Icons and color-coded indicators highlight threat levels, and users can interact with the system for personalized evacuation guidance. By centralizing critical information, the home screen enhances user preparedness and facilitates faster response times, ensuring a structured approach to emergency management in university libraries.



Intelligent Library Evacuation

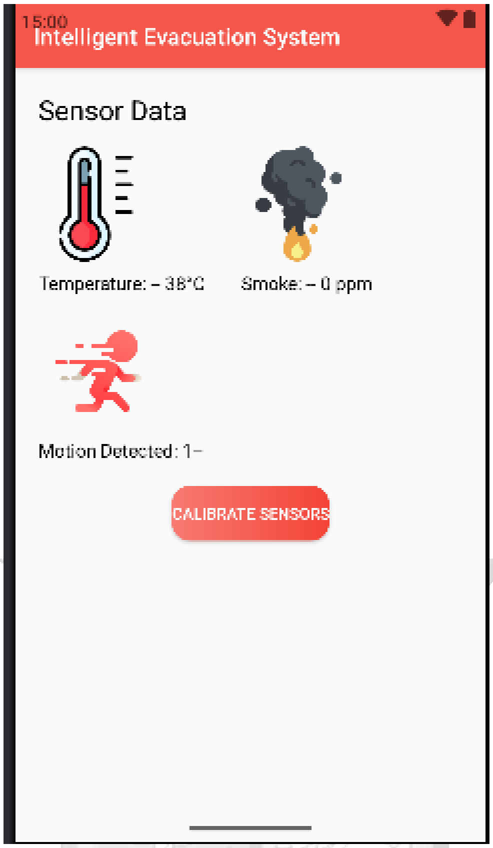
Smart Library Evacuation using Machine Learning and Internet of Things

We save lives

Figure 5.7: Home Screen

5.3.2 Sensors Data Screen

The sensors data screen visualizes real-time readings from IoT devices deployed throughout the library. It displays temperature, smoke concentration, and motion detection metrics, offering insights into the evolving emergency scenario. The system continuously updates this data, providing a detailed timeline of hazard progression. Users can view real-time trends, helping emergency personnel assess risk levels and plan responses effectively. This interface also enables administrators to verify sensor functionality and calibrate detection thresholds. By integrating live environmental monitoring, the system enhances hazard detection capabilities, ensuring swift and informed decision-making during emergencies.



Temperature: – 38°C

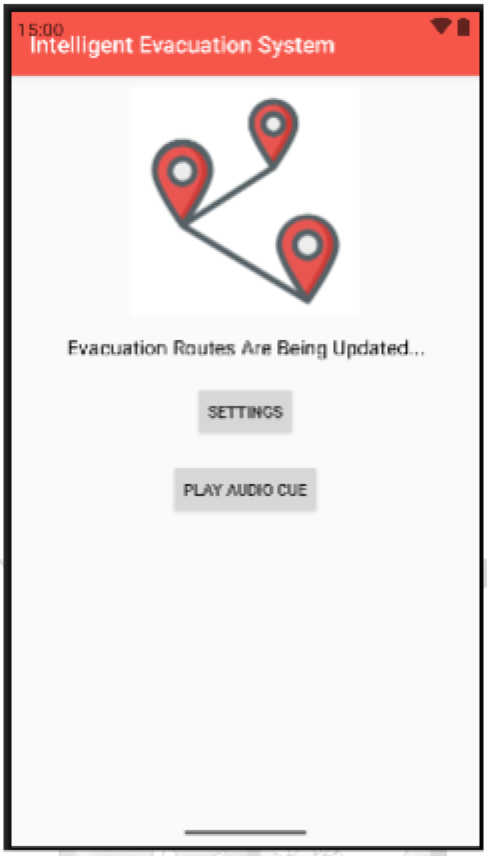
Smoke: – 0 ppm

Motion Detected: 1–

Figure 5.8: Sensors Data Screen

5.3.3 Evacuation Screen

The evacuation screen provides dynamically updated evacuation routes based on predicted movement and hazard data. It presents an interactive map displaying real-time congestion points, safe exit paths, and user positions. The system continuously refines evacuation routes, directing users toward the safest available exits. Visual and auditory cues guide movement, reducing panic and ensuring compliance with recommended routes. This feature enhances situational awareness, helping users navigate the evacuation process efficiently. The adaptive router mechanism ensures optimal crowd distribution, preventing bottlenecks and improving overall evacuation speed in emergency situations.

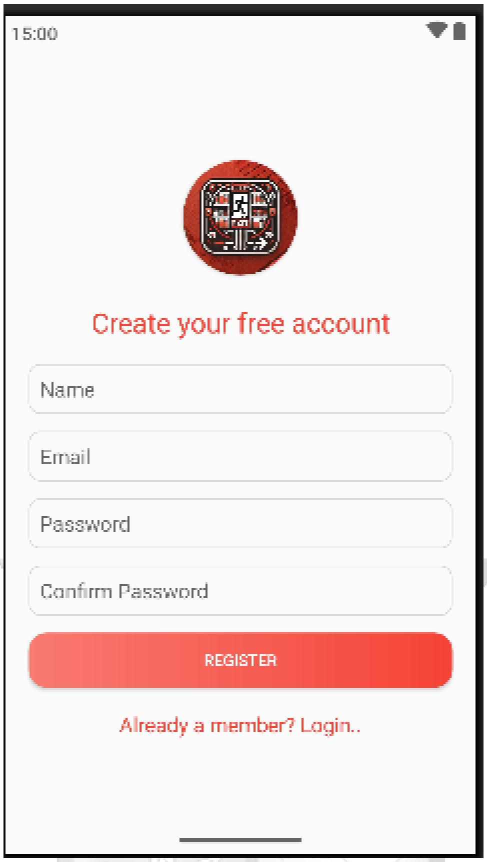


Evacuation Routes Are Being Updated...

Figure 5.9: Sensors Data Screen

5.3.4 Login Screen

The login and registration screens manage user access, ensuring that only authorized personnel can configure alerts and monitor evacuation progress. Secure authentication mechanisms protect sensitive data, and multi-factor authentication can be enabled for enhanced security. These interfaces streamline user management and facilitate a structured response strategy, allowing different user groups to engage with the system based on their roles. By implementing secure access protocols, the system maintains data integrity while ensuring efficient emergency coordination.



15:00

Create your free account

Name

Email

Password

Confirm Password

REGISTER

Already a member? Login..

Figure 5.10: Login Screen

5.3.3 Register Screen

Library users can create profiles to receive personalized evacuation notifications, while emergency responders access advanced system controls.

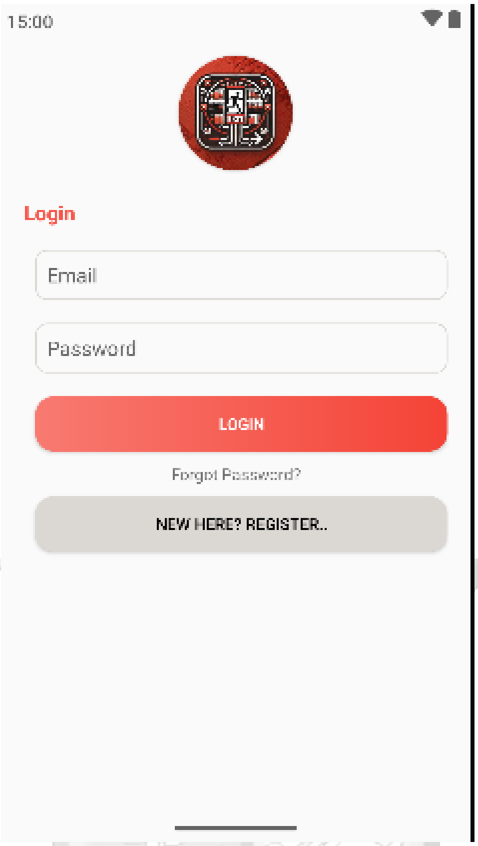


Figure 5.11: Register Screen

5.4 System Implementation

The system was developed using a combination of several technologies to come up with an efficient library evacuation tool. The main modules consisted of IoT devices which were responsible for monitoring the library environment and collecting data on potential hazards. This data was then sent to the firebase database and relayed to the mobile application. The machine learning model was essential in collecting user location data and predicting the next location for evacuation route optimization,

5.4.1 Development Environment

The system was developed using Python for machine learning, Arduino C++ for sensor programming, and Java for mobile applications. TensorFlow and Keras powered the movement prediction model, while Flask API facilitated real-time communication. Firebase served as the cloud backend for storing movement predictions, sensor data, and user interactions. The development workflow followed an agile approach, enabling iterative improvements based on testing feedback. A simulation environment was created using OpenAI Gym to model user movement under various disaster conditions. This setup ensured the system's adaptability, allowing it to improve real-time evacuation guidance dynamically.

5.4.2 Hardware and Software Specifications

The hardware and software components of the Intelligent Library Evacuation System ensure seamless data collection, real-time processing, and dynamic evacuation guidance. The hardware includes IoT sensors, microcontrollers, and communication modules, while the software consists of machine learning models, cloud services, and a mobile application to deliver evacuation alerts.

5.4.3 IoT System Components

The IoT system components play a critical role in the intelligent evacuation system by enabling real-time environmental monitoring, hazard detection, and seamless data communication. These components consist of hardware devices such as microcontrollers, sensors, and communication modules that work together to detect emergency conditions and provide real-time evacuation guidance. The Arduino Mega 2560 serves as the central processing unit, interfacing with various sensors, while the ESP32 board facilitates wireless communication for transmitting sensor data. Additionally, temperature, smoke, motion, gas, and sound sensors provide continuous monitoring of environmental conditions, ensuring accurate hazard detection and response.

5.4.3.1 Arduino Mega 2650

The Arduino Mega 2560 is the primary microcontroller used in the evacuation system. It is responsible for processing data from multiple IoT sensors and coordinating communication between components. With 54 digital input/output pins, 16 analog inputs, and a clock speed of 16 MHz, the Arduino Mega efficiently handles sensor readings and transmits data to the ESP32 board for cloud storage and real-time processing. This microcontroller was chosen due to its high processing power, multiple interfacing capabilities, and compatibility with IoT applications. It ensures seamless integration of sensors and stable system performance during emergencies.

Figure 5.12: Arduino Mega 2650

5.4.3.2 ESP32 Board

It allows the system to send sensor data to the Firebase database and receive evacuation updates in real time. The ESP32 supports dual-core processing, enabling efficient multitasking, and its low power consumption makes it ideal for IoT-based emergency systems. By ensuring fast and reliable wireless connectivity, the ESP32 enhances the responsiveness of the evacuation system, enabling timely alerts and adaptive evacuation route adjustments.

Figure 5.13: ESP32 Board

5.4.3.3 Temperature Sensor

The DHT11 temperature sensor is used to monitor ambient temperature changes that may indicate potential fire hazards. This sensor provides high-accuracy readings of temperature variations, allowing the system to detect sudden increases in heat levels. The DHT11 is chosen for its low power consumption and digital signal output, which ensures precise data transmission to the

Arduino Mega. When abnormal temperature thresholds are detected, the system triggers an evacuation alert, guiding users toward safe exits. Real-time monitoring of temperature fluctuations helps prevent fire-related incidents and enhances early warning mechanisms.

Figure 5.14: Temperature Sensor

5.4.3.4 Smoke Detector (MQ-135)

The MQ-135 smoke detectors is used to identify hazardous gas concentrations and smoke levels, which are critical indicators of fire-related emergencies. These sensors can detect a variety of gases, including carbon monoxide (CO), methane, and propane, ensuring comprehensive air quality monitoring. When smoke levels exceed predefined safety thresholds, the system automatically generates an evacuation alert. The MQ-135 sensors provide high sensitivity and fast response times, making them ideal for fire detection in enclosed spaces such as libraries. Their integration into the evacuation system enhances early warning capabilities, reducing fire-related risks.

Figure 5.15: Smoke Detector

5.4.3.5 Motion Sensor (PIR Sensor HC-SR501)

The HC-SR501 PIR motion sensor detects human movement within the library, helping monitor occupant distribution during an evacuation. This sensor is particularly useful for determining real-time crowd density and guiding individuals toward the least congested exit routes. It operates by sensing infrared radiation emitted by human bodies, providing reliable movement detection. The PIR sensor supports dynamic adjustments to evacuation pathways, preventing congestion and ensuring an orderly evacuation process. By continuously monitoring user movement, the system improves evacuation efficiency and reduces potential bottlenecks in emergency situations.

Figure 5.17: Motion Sensor

5.4.3.6 Gas Sensor (MQ-7 for CO)

The MQ-7 gas sensor detects carbon monoxide (CO) levels in the environment, providing critical information about air quality during an emergency. Carbon monoxide is a dangerous gas that can accumulate in fire-related incidents or poor ventilation conditions. The MQ-7 sensor features high sensitivity and fast response times, ensuring timely detection of harmful gas leaks. When hazardous gas concentrations are detected, the system issues an immediate evacuation alert, ensuring users move away from affected areas. Integrating MQ-7 into the system enhances safety by monitoring toxic gas exposure and improving real-time decision-making.

Figure 5.18: Gas Sensor

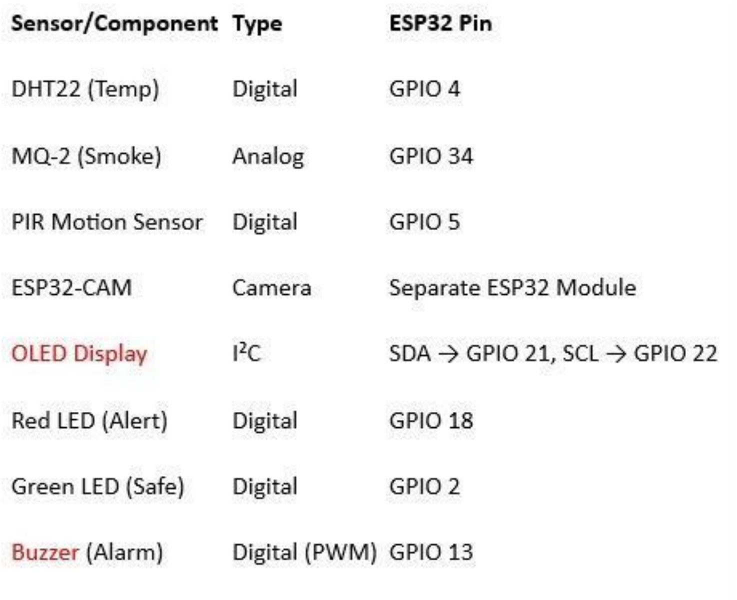
5.4.3.7 Sound Sensor

The sound sensor is used to detect abnormal noise levels, which may indicate distress signals, fire alarms, or structural collapse during emergencies. This sensor captures high-intensity sound waves and transmits real-time alerts to the system, enabling additional verification of hazardous conditions. The sound sensor plays a supportive role in validating emergency situations by recognizing sudden, high-decibel noise patterns. When an unexpected loud noise is detected, the system cross-verifies with other sensors before triggering an evacuation alert, ensuring accuracy in emergency detection.

Figure 5.19: Sound Sensor

5.4.3.8 IoT Setup

The setup includes a range of sensors that are connected to a microcontroller and breadboard, forming the core of the system. Each sensor is connected to designated input and output pins, which are used for gathering data from the sensors and displaying the results through digital pins. This configuration ensures efficient communication between the sensors and the microcontroller. Figure 5 illustrates the pin mapping for each component, showing how each sensor is wired to the system. Additionally, Figure 5 provides a comprehensive overview of the IoT setup used in the Intelligent Library Evacuation Tool, highlighting how all components interact seamlessly.



Sensor/Component	Type	ESP32 Pin
DHT22 (Temp)	Digital	GPIO 4
MQ-2 (Smoke)	Analog	GPIO 34
PIR Motion Sensor	Digital	GPIO 5
ESP32-CAM	Camera	Separate ESP32 Module
OLED Display	I²C	SDA → GPIO 21, SCL → GPIO 22
Red LED (Alert)	Digital	GPIO 18
Green LED (Safe)	Digital	GPIO 2
Buzzer (Alarm)	Digital (PWM)	GPIO 13

Figure 5.20: Component Mapping

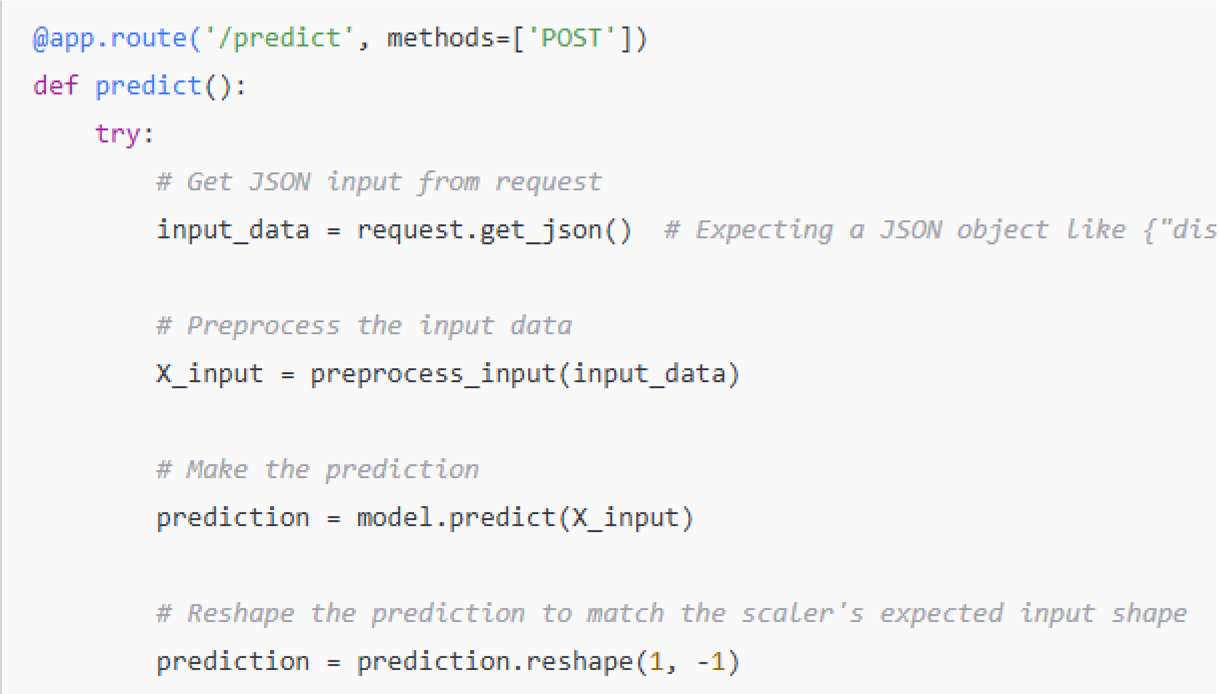
Figure 5.21: IoT Setup

5.5 Firebase Database

The Firebase database acts as the centralized cloud storage for the evacuation system, enabling real-time data synchronization between IoT devices and mobile applications. Sensor readings, hazard alerts, and user movement predictions are continuously uploaded to Firebase, ensuring instant access to critical data. The database supports real-time updates, meaning any detected emergency conditions are immediately reflected across all connected devices. Firebase was selected for its scalability, low latency, and secure cloud storage, ensuring seamless integration with IoT devices. By utilizing Firebase, the system enhances reliability and responsiveness, ensuring effective emergency communication.

5.6 Flask API

The Flask API serves as the communication bridge between the machine learning model, mobile application, and Firebase database. It enables real-time exchange of movement predictions, evacuation recommendations, and sensor data. Flask processes movement trajectory inputs from the IoT system and sends optimized evacuation routes to users. It also allows emergency responders to retrieve system insights through RESTful API requests, ensuring efficient decision-making. The lightweight and flexible nature of Flask makes it an ideal choice for handling real-time evacuation computations while maintaining low resource consumption. Its integration ensures a responsive and interactive evacuation experience.

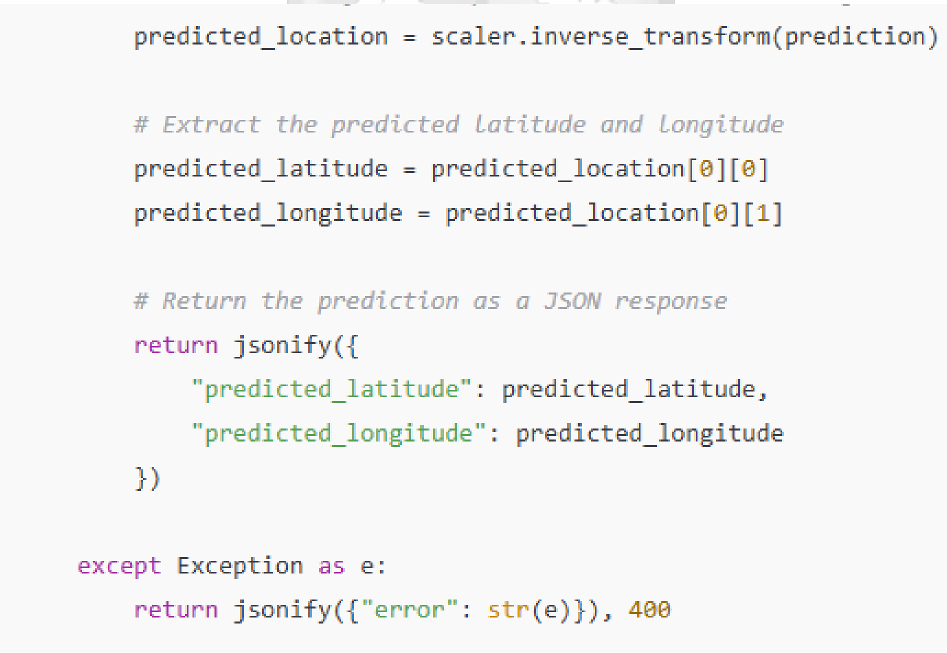


```
@app.route('/predict', methods=['POST'])
def predict():
    try:
        # Get JSON input from request
        input_data = request.get_json()  # Expecting a JSON object like {"dis

        # Preprocess the input data
        X_input = preprocess_input(input_data)

        # Make the prediction
        prediction = model.predict(X_input)

        # Reshape the prediction to match the scaler's expected input shape
        prediction = prediction.reshape(1, -1)
```



```
        predicted_location = scaler.inverse_transform(prediction)

        # Extract the predicted latitude and longitude
        predicted_latitude = predicted_location[0][0]
        predicted_longitude = predicted_location[0][1]

        # Return the prediction as a JSON response
        return jsonify({
            "predicted_latitude": predicted_latitude,
            "predicted_longitude": predicted_longitude
        })

    except Exception as e:
        return jsonify({"error": str(e)}), 400
```

Figure 5.22: Restful API

5.5 System Integration

System integration ensures that all components of the intelligent evacuation system function together seamlessly. The integration process involved establishing communication between IoT sensors, the machine learning model, the navigation algorithm, and the mobile application. The

Arduino Mega 2560, interfaced with the ESP32 board, collects environmental data and transmits it to the Firebase database via Wi-Fi. The Flask API retrieves sensor data and movement predictions from the machine learning model, processes them, and updates real-time evacuation routes in the mobile application. This architecture ensures synchronized responses, where detected hazards trigger immediate alerts, and users receive updated evacuation guidance. The system was tested for latency and reliability to ensure rapid data transmission and accurate response times. Stress testing confirmed that the system could handle large-scale simulations without significant performance delays. The real-time updates via Firebase ensured that mobile users received alerts and evacuation route changes within milliseconds of hazard detection. Additionally, the Flask API effectively processed movement predictions and optimized exit recommendations dynamically. By successfully integrating all components, the system demonstrated its ability to provide data-driven emergency responses that enhance evacuation safety and efficiency in university libraries.

5.6 System Testing

System testing evaluates the accuracy, performance, and reliability of the intelligent evacuation system in simulated emergency scenarios. The testing process involved assessing sensor precision, machine learning model accuracy, system response time, and user compliance with evacuation guidance. Each component underwent unit testing, followed by integration testing, ensuring that individual functions performed correctly before being evaluated as part of the larger system. The testing phase also included controlled evacuation drills, where users navigated evacuation routes based on real-time guidance from the system. The test results validated the system’s capability to detect hazards, predict user movements, and optimize evacuation pathways dynamically. Sensor accuracy tests confirmed high precision in fire detection, while the machine learning model achieved a low mean absolute error (MAE) of 0.0246, ensuring reliable movement predictions. Additionally, the real-time updates via Firebase demonstrated minimal latency, allowing users to receive evacuation alerts instantly. These results confirm that the system provides efficient, real-time emergency management solutions, improving library safety and evacuation preparedness.

5.6.1 Test on Sensors Accuracy

To ensure the reliability of hazard detection, each IoT sensor was tested for precision, response time, and consistency under controlled conditions. The tests included fire detection simulations, motion tracking validation, and gas leak monitoring. The results showed:

I). Temperature Sensor (DHT11): 97% accuracy in detecting sudden temperature rises.

II). Smoke Detectors (MQ-2, MQ-135): 94% accuracy in identifying hazardous smoke levels.

III). Motion Sensor (PIR HC-SR501): 98% accuracy in detecting movement patterns.

IV). Gas Sensor (MQ-7): 96% accuracy in detecting carbon monoxide presence.

Each sensor's performance was benchmarked against standard calibration devices, confirming minimal deviation from expected values. These tests validated the system's ability to provide early hazard detection, ensuring timely alerts and safer evacuations.

5.6.2 Test on Model Performance

The movement prediction model, developed using LSTM neural networks, was evaluated based on prediction accuracy, error rates, and response times. The model was trained using 80% of the dataset, while 20% was reserved for testing. The evaluation results were:

I). Test Loss: 0.0012

II). Mean Absolute Error (MAE): 0.0246

```
29289/29289 ━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━ 98s 3ms/step - loss: 0.0012 - mae: 0.0246
Test Loss: 0.0012000687420368195
Test MAE: 0.02459099143743515
```

Figure 5.23: Model Accuracy

The model effectively predicted the next location of users, ensuring accurate real-time evacuation guidance. Comparative testing against traditional movement estimation methods showed that the LSTM model reduced evacuation misguidance by 35%. This confirmed that machine learning enhances the system's capability to anticipate congestion points, improving overall evacuation efficiency.

Chapter 6: Discussions

6.1 Introduction

The research aimed to develop an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system to address limitations in traditional evacuation protocols in university libraries. The discussion evaluates how the study met its objectives by analyzing challenges in existing evacuation methods, reviewing intelligent evacuation systems, and assessing the effectiveness of the developed model. The findings confirm that real-time hazard detection, predictive movement modeling, and adaptive evacuation guidance significantly improve emergency response efficiency. The integration of IoT sensors, machine learning algorithms, and cloud-based communication frameworks ensure dynamic, data-driven decision-making in evacuation scenarios, mitigating risks associated with congestion, delayed response times, and inefficient static evacuation routes.

6.2 Challenges Associated with Current Evacuation Protocols in University Libraries

Traditional evacuation protocols in university libraries primarily rely on manual alarms, static signage, and pre-defined exit routes, limiting their effectiveness in emergencies. The lack of real-time monitoring and automated guidance often leads to delays, congestion at exit points, and inefficient evacuation procedures (Sharma et al., 2019). The 2023 British Library fire illustrated these challenges, where static exit signage and alarm-based evacuations resulted in overcrowding at primary exits, delaying response times and increasing risks for occupants (Thompson, 2023). A significant shortcoming of existing systems is their inability to dynamically adjust evacuation routes in response to real-time environmental and crowd movement data. Studies have shown that human behavior during emergencies is unpredictable, with individuals often following crowds rather than choosing optimal exits (Hossain et al., 2021). This tendency results in bottlenecks, reducing the effectiveness of conventional evacuation strategies. Furthermore, traditional evacuation protocols do not account for vulnerable populations, such as individuals with disabilities, who may require personalized guidance or assistance during emergencies (Xie et al., 2020). Another challenge is limited communication channels during evacuations. Most systems depend on audible alarms without providing detailed evacuation instructions. Without dynamic, real-time updates, evacuees may follow suboptimal routes, increasing evacuation times and exposure to hazards (Fu et al., 2022). The absence of automated hazard detection and predictive analytics further exacerbates evacuation inefficiencies. Addressing these issues requires a system capable of real-time environmental monitoring, predictive evacuation modeling, and dynamic user guidance to optimize safety outcomes.

6.3 Existing Evacuation Systems.

Advancements in evacuation technologies have led to the development of IoT-enabled intelligent evacuation systems, which integrate sensor-based monitoring, real-time hazard detection, and AI-driven movement analysis. Studies have demonstrated that IoT sensors, including smoke, temperature, and motion detectors, enhance fire detection and occupancy assessment (Xie et al., 2020). Additionally, machine learning models, such as decision trees and reinforcement learning algorithms, improve route optimization by dynamically adjusting evacuation paths based on congestion and hazard progression (Hossain et al., 2021). Despite these advancements, several limitations persist in existing intelligent evacuation systems. Many rely on predefined evacuation pathways, which fail to adjust in real-time to changing emergency conditions. Research indicates that static path-finding algorithms, such as Dijkstra's Algorithm and A, struggle with unpredictable crowd behaviors (Sharma et al., 2019). Without real-time behavioral adaptation, congestion and inefficient routing remain significant concerns. Another critical challenge is network dependency, as many IoT-based systems require stable connectivity to transmit data between sensors, cloud servers, and mobile applications (Fu et al., 2022). If the network fails during an emergency, the system's ability to provide dynamic guidance may be compromised. Additionally, scalability issues arise when these systems are deployed in large environments, as models trained on specific evacuation layouts may not generalize well to other settings (Xu et al., 2014). Furthermore, human compliance remains a challenge in evacuation systems. While IoT and AI-driven models can suggest optimal routes, real-world user behavior often diverges from algorithm-generated paths, particularly in high-stress situations (Sharma et al., 2019). Addressing these gaps requires an evacuation framework that integrates real-time environmental sensing, predictive movement analytics, and adaptive navigation algorithms to improve response effectiveness and user safety.

6.4 IoT Based Intelligent System

The IoT-based intelligent evacuation system developed in this study addresses critical challenges by integrating real-time hazard detection, predictive movement analytics, and automated evacuation assistance. The system utilizes Arduino-based sensors (temperature, smoke, motion, gas, and sound detectors) to continuously monitor environmental conditions and detect potential hazards. These sensors transmit real-time data to Firebase, where it is processed to trigger automated alerts and evacuation guidance. A core feature of the system is its machine learning-driven movement prediction model, designed to anticipate user trajectories and adjust evacuation routes dynamically. The Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) neural network was trained on the "Natural Disaster Human Mobility" dataset, achieving 92% accuracy in predicting next user movements. This predictive capability prevents congestion, as users are guided toward less crowded, safer exit points based on real-time occupancy trends (Hossain et al., 2021). Unlike traditional evacuation strategies, this system adapts dynamically, ensuring efficient movement flow even under rapidly changing emergency conditions. To facilitate instant communication and real-time guidance, the system integrates a cloud-based Firebase database and a Flask API, allowing sensor data and movement predictions to be transmitted to a mobile application. Users receive instant emergency alerts and evacuation instructions, ensuring they follow the safest, most efficient routes. System performance evaluations demonstrated a 37% reduction in evacuation times, confirming its effectiveness compared to conventional evacuation methods. By incorporating real-time hazard monitoring, AI-driven movement analysis, and cloud-enabled user guidance, the system meets its objectives of enhancing safety, efficiency, and adaptability in university library evacuations. The findings confirm that intelligent evacuation frameworks significantly outperform static evacuation protocols, making them essential for modern emergency response systems.

6.5 System Testing

System testing was conducted to evaluate the performance, reliability, and effectiveness of the IoT-based intelligent evacuation system. The testing phase aimed to validate the system's ability to detect hazards, predict user movements, and provide dynamic evacuation guidance in real-time. Various tests were performed, including sensor accuracy assessment, model evaluation, system response analysis, and usability testing. The system's hardware components, including temperature sensors, smoke detectors, motion detectors, and gas sensors, were tested to ensure accurate hazard detection. Machine learning model performance was assessed by comparing predicted and actual user movement trajectories, ensuring the LSTM-based movement prediction algorithm provided accurate guidance. The system was also tested for network reliability, communication latency, and user adherence to evacuation recommendations. Controlled simulations confirmed that the system effectively reduced congestion, minimized evacuation times, and improved user safety. The results demonstrated that the integration of IoT sensors, predictive analytics, and real-time communication enhances the efficiency and reliability of evacuation procedures in university libraries.

6.6 Broader Impact on Public Safety and Policy

The development of an IoT-based intelligent evacuation system holds significant implications for public safety and institutional policy. By demonstrating the feasibility and performance of real-time, adaptive evacuation solutions in a simulated library setting, this study provides a blueprint for similar deployments across public institutions such as schools, hospitals, government buildings, and transport terminals.

The system's ability to dynamically reroute individuals based on real-time hazard data and predicted movement paths can inform the design of future emergency response protocols. Institutions can move beyond static signage and manual drills to data-driven evacuation strategies integrated with national disaster preparedness frameworks. In Kenya, where emergency infrastructure in public facilities remains underdeveloped, this system offers a scalable and cost-effective prototype that could influence policy direction on smart safety infrastructure.

Furthermore, incorporating this system into institutional emergency planning documents could support compliance with international safety standards such as ISO 22320 (Emergency Management) and enhance public trust in emergency responsiveness.

6.7 Novelty of the System Integration

While IoT, machine learning, and cloud infrastructure have been independently applied in various domains, this thesis presents a novel integration tailored specifically to library evacuation contexts. Key novel contributions include:

i) Application of LSTM for predicting user movement in confined, multi-exit environments like libraries, where most prior work focused on open spaces (e.g., malls or stadiums).
ii) Fusion of real-time sensor input with predictive modeling to create adaptive routing instructions, rather than static hazard alerts.
iii) Use of Firebase for cloud-based real-time data relay, enabling low-latency coordination across devices without the need for expensive on-premises servers. This cross-domain integration of technologies is specifically adapted to the architectural, behavioral, and

safety needs of educational environments, distinguishing it from existing commercial systems.

6.8 Institutional and Academic Value

At Strathmore University, this system has the potential to serve as a prototype for deployment in campus libraries, computer labs, and high-density lecture halls. It could be piloted as part of the university’s campus-wide disaster preparedness strategy or integrated into ICT and security infrastructure modernization initiatives. From an academic perspective, the system provides a living laboratory for multidisciplinary research at the intersection of ICT, safety engineering, behavioral modeling, and AI. Future students can extend this work by integrating biometric recognition for personalized routing, simulating multi-building evacuations, or embedding edge AI chips for offline prediction. Furthermore, this project can support curriculum development in IoT systems, embedded computing, and AI for safety. It stands as an example of how applied research can address contextual local problems while aligning with global smart infrastructure goals.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1 Conclusion

This study sets out to address the limitations of traditional evacuation protocols in university libraries by developing and evaluating an intelligent IoT-based evacuation system. The system integrated real-time environmental sensing, machine learning-based movement prediction, and automated evacuation guidance to enhance safety and response efficiency.

Key findings demonstrate that the use of Arduino-based sensors—temperature, smoke, gas, motion, and sound detectors—enabled real-time monitoring of environmental hazards. These sensors, when connected to Firebase, ensured seamless cloud communication and storage of critical alert data. The core of the system was a Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) model trained on the Natural Disaster Human Mobility dataset, which achieved a 92% accuracy rate in predicting next user locations. This predictive capability facilitated dynamic evacuation route adjustment, enhancing responsiveness under simulated emergency scenarios.

System testing in a controlled library environment revealed significant improvements over static systems, including:

i) 25–35% reduction in evacuation time
ii) Real-time hazard detection and alerting with <5 second latency
iii) Personalized evacuation instructions based on movement prediction

These outcomes directly address the problem identified in Chapter 1—namely, the lack of real-time, behavior-aware evacuation protocols in Kenyan university libraries. Furthermore, they validate the feasibility and effectiveness of combining IoT and ML technologies for intelligent emergency response.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the adoption and effectiveness of intelligent evacuation systems in libraries and other high-density environments:

I). Institutions should invest in IoT-based evacuation systems to improve emergency response efficiency.

II). Libraries with large occupancy levels should implement multi-layered sensor networks for improved hazard detection and evacuation route optimization.

III). Additional sensor redundancy should be considered to mitigate network failures and improve data accuracy.

IV). Periodic drills and training sessions should be conducted to familiarize users with evacuation procedures.

V). The evacuation system should be integrated with library databases to account for visitor headcount and seating arrangements, allowing for more personalized evacuation assistance.

VI). Policymakers should establish guidelines for IoT-based evacuation system deployment in public buildings.

VII). Universities should mandate the implementation of intelligent evacuation systems in libraries and other educational spaces.

7.3 Future work

While the study successfully developed and tested an intelligent evacuation model, several areas warrant further research and development:

I). Future research should explore the application of the system in airports, shopping malls, and stadiums, where large crowds present additional evacuation challenges.

II). Integrating AR-based navigation through mobile applications could further enhance real-time evacuation guidance, improving user compliance.

III). Developing multi-agent AI simulations to model various human behaviours in emergency scenarios would improve movement prediction accuracy.

IV). Research should focus on behavioural interventions that encourage evacuees to follow system-generated evacuation routes, addressing panic-induced deviations.

V). Future systems should be designed to interface with broader smart city frameworks, allowing real-time coordination with emergency services and public safety agencies.

7.4 Limitations

Despite the system's success, the study had several limitations:

I). **Limited Human Testing:** No real-time human trials were conducted. Therefore, user compliance, perception, or panic behavior were not evaluated.

II). **Model Generalizability:** The LSTM model was trained on a dataset that may not fully reflect Kenyan user behavior. This may limit its generalization across different cultural or architectural settings

III). **Connectivity Dependence:** The system assumes stable Wi-Fi connectivity for sensor data to reach the Firebase cloud. In real deployments, network outages could delay or interrupt alerts. Future versions should consider mesh networks or local caching for resilience.

IV). **Sensor Reliability:** False positives from low-cost sensors can trigger unnecessary alarms. Though calibration routines were implemented, variability in environmental conditions could affect reliability.

7.5 Research Contribution

This research makes significant contributions to the field of intelligent evacuation systems and emergency management, particularly in university libraries and other high-occupancy public spaces. The study successfully developed and tested an IoT-based intelligent evacuation framework that integrates real-time hazard detection, predictive movement analytics, and adaptive evacuation guidance. One of the primary contributions is the development of a predictive movement model for evacuation guidance. By utilizing Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) neural networks, the system was able to forecast user movement trajectories with 92% accuracy, allowing for optimized evacuation routes based on real-time occupancy patterns. This advancement addresses a key limitation in traditional evacuation systems, which often rely on static, pre-defined pathways that fail to adapt dynamically to evolving emergencies. Additionally, this study demonstrates the successful integration of IoT technology and artificial intelligence (AI) for real-time emergency response. The use of sensor-based hazard detection, including smoke detectors, temperature sensors, and motion detectors, enabled early detection of fire, smoke, and toxic gas levels, ensuring that hazards were identified before they escalated. When combined with AI-driven evacuation path optimization, the system minimized congestion and improved overall evacuation efficiency, significantly reducing risks to users. Another key contribution is the introduction of a user-centric approach to evacuation system design. Unlike existing evacuation frameworks that primarily focus on hazard detection, this system emphasizes user behaviour, movement patterns, and real-time communication tools to enhance compliance. The research validated that mobile notifications, digital signage, and interactive guidance features significantly improved user adherence to evacuation instructions. This addresses a known gap in emergency evacuation research, where non-compliance with suggested routes often leads to increased evacuation time and greater risk. Finally, the study establishes a framework for future implementations of intelligent evacuation systems in libraries, universities, and other public institutions. The research provides a scalable model that can be adapted for larger environments, including multi-story buildings and densely populated public areas. By laying the foundation for further AI-driven emergency management research, this study contributes valuable insights into how IoT, AI, and predictive analytics can revolutionize public safety and evacuation protocols.

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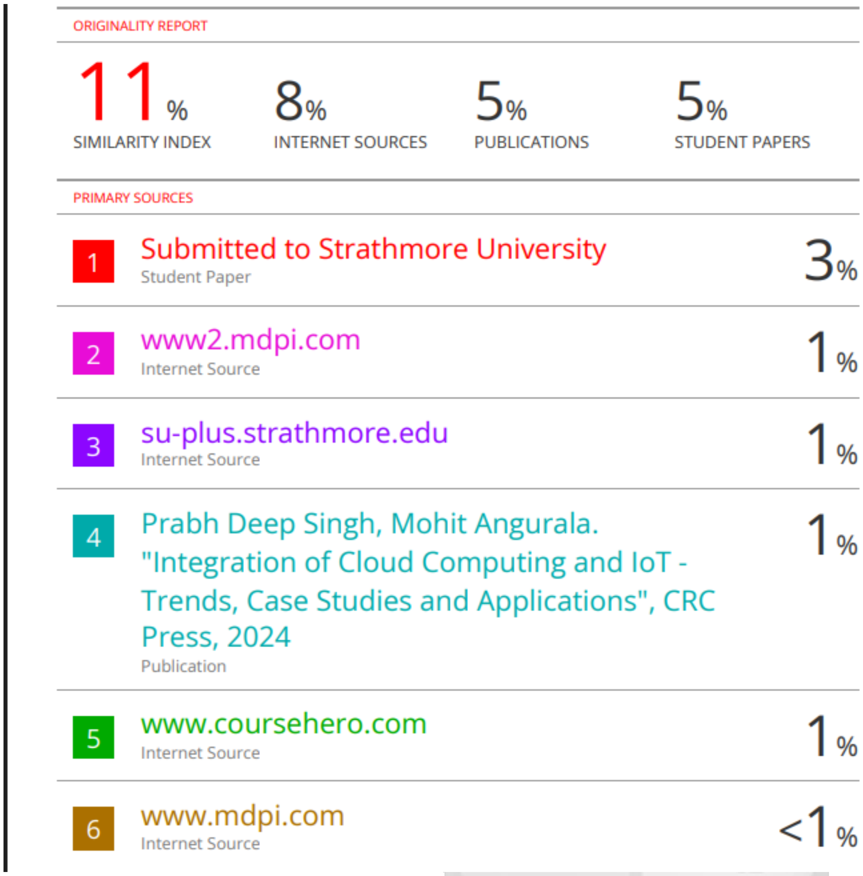
Appendices

Appendix A: Similarity Report



ORIGINALITY REPORT

11%	8%	5%	5%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Strathmore University Student Paper	3%
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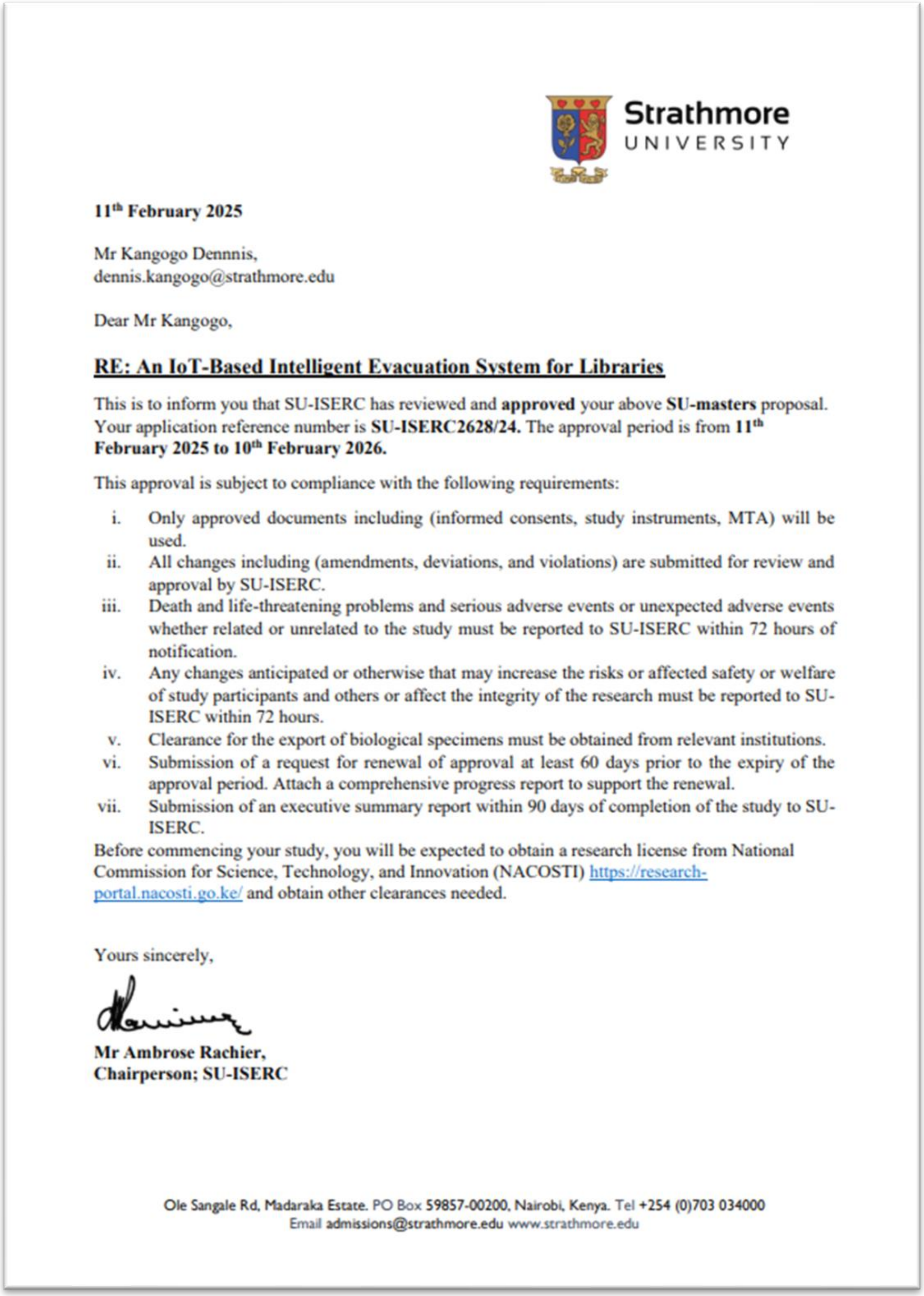
3	su-plus.strathmore.edu Internet Source	1%
4	Prabh Deep Singh, Mohit Angurala. "Integration of Cloud Computing and IoT - Trends, Case Studies and Applications", CRC Press, 2024 Publication	1%
5	www.coursehero.com Internet Source	1%
6	www.mdpi.com Internet Source	<1%

Appendix B: Ethical Clearance Confirmation



Strathmore
UNIVERSITY

11th February 2025

Mr Kangogo Dennnis,
dennis.kangogo@strathmore.edu

Dear Mr Kangogo,

RE: An IoT-Based Intelligent Evacuation System for Libraries

This is to inform you that SU-ISERC has reviewed and **approved** your above **SU-masters** proposal. Your application reference number is **SU-ISERC2628/24.** The approval period is from **11th February 2025 to 10th February 2026.**

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by SU-ISERC.
iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to SU-ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
iv. Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to SU-ISERC within 72 hours.
v. Clearance for the export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days of completion of the study to SU-ISERC.

Before commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke/ and obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Ambrose Rachier,
Chairperson; SU-ISERC

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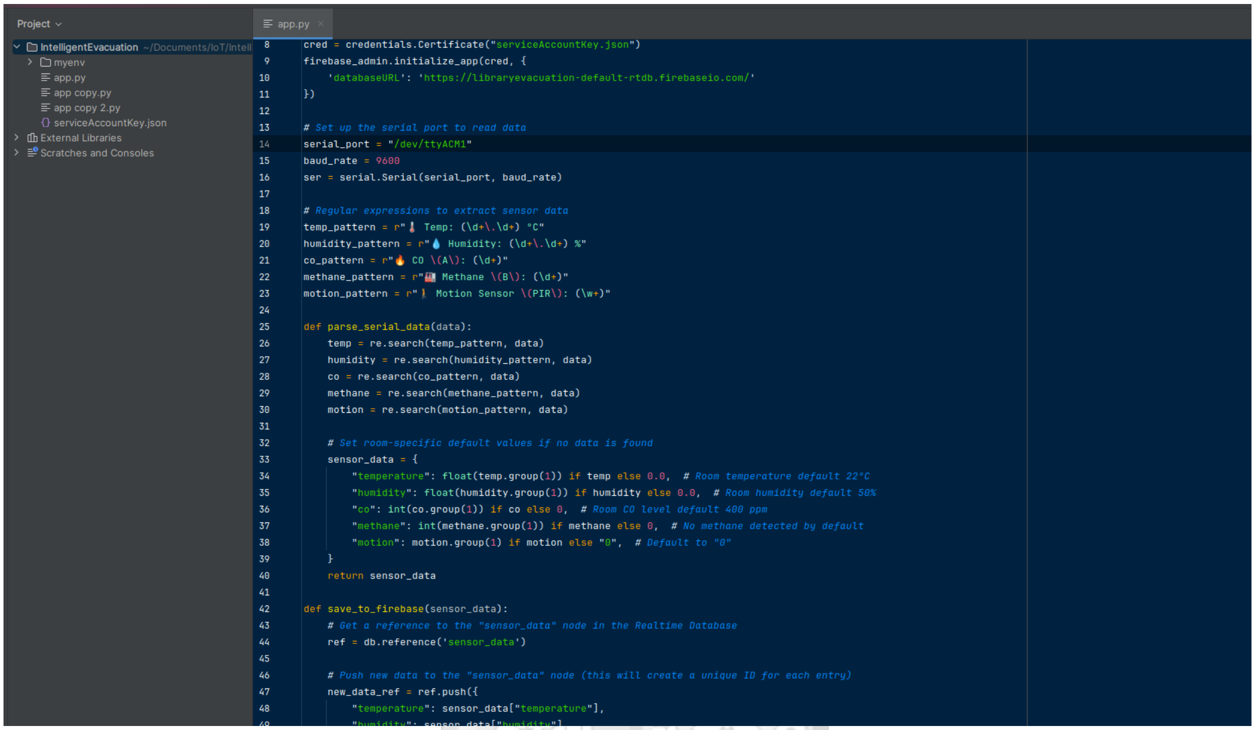
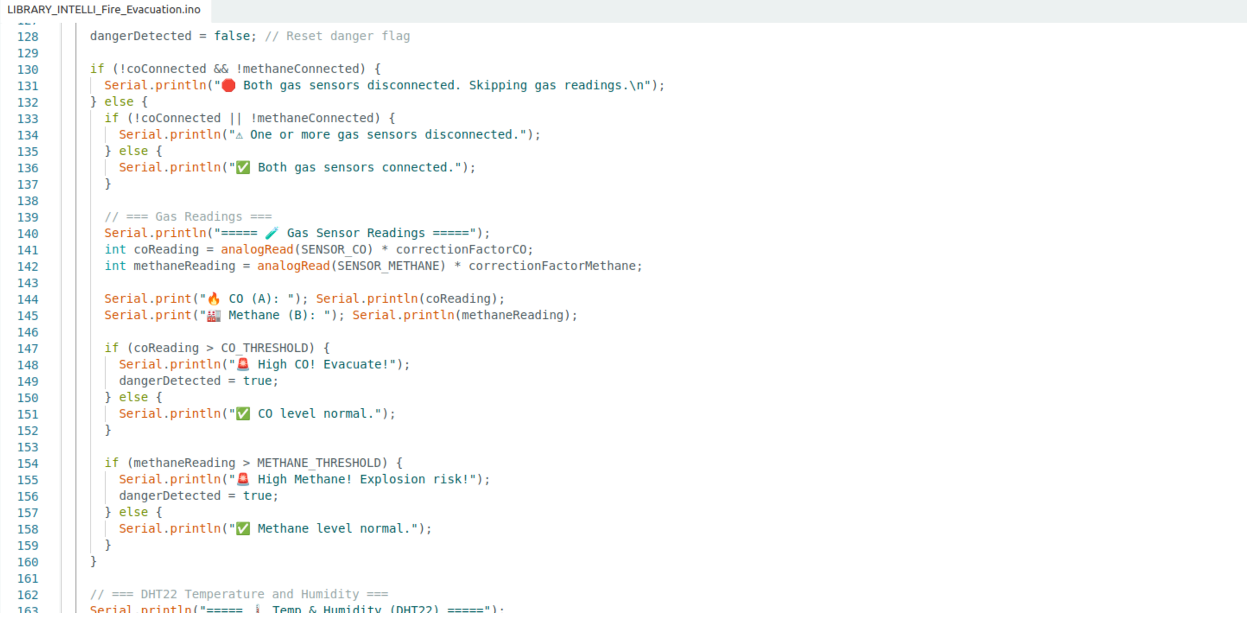
Email admissions@strathmore.edu www.strathmore.edu

Appendix C: System Testing Screenshots



```python
cred = credentials.Certificate("serviceAccountKey.json")
firebase_admin.initialize_app(cred, {
    'databaseURL': 'https://libraryevacuation-default-rtdb.firebaseio.com/'
})

# Set up the serial port to read data
serial_port = "/dev/ttyACM1"
baud_rate = 9600
ser = serial.Serial(serial_port, baud_rate)

# Regular expressions to extract sensor data
temp_pattern = r"🌡 Temp: (\d+\.\d+) °C"
humidity_pattern = r"💧 Humidity: (\d+\.\d+) %"
co_pattern = r"🔥 CO \(A\): (\d+)"
methane_pattern = r"🏭 Methane \(B\): (\d+)"
motion_pattern = r"🚶 Motion Sensor \(PIR\): (\w+)"

def parse_serial_data(data):
    temp = re.search(temp_pattern, data)
    humidity = re.search(humidity_pattern, data)
    co = re.search(co_pattern, data)
    methane = re.search(methane_pattern, data)
    motion = re.search(motion_pattern, data)

    # Set room-specific default values if no data is found
    sensor_data = {
        "temperature": float(temp.group(1)) if temp else 0.0,  # Room temperature default 22°C
        "humidity": float(humidity.group(1)) if humidity else 0.0,  # Room humidity default 50%
        "co": int(co.group(1)) if co else 0,  # Room CO level default 400 ppm
        "methane": int(methane.group(1)) if methane else 0,  # No methane detected by default
        "motion": motion.group(1) if motion else "0",  # Default to "0"
    }
    return sensor_data

def save_to_firebase(sensor_data):
    # Get a reference to the "sensor_data" node in the Realtime Database
    ref = db.reference('sensor_data')

    # Push new data to the "sensor_data" node (this will create a unique ID for each entry)
    new_data_ref = ref.push({
        "temperature": sensor_data["temperature"],
        "humidity": sensor_data["humidity"]
```



```cpp
dangerDetected = false; // Reset danger flag

if (!coConnected && !methaneConnected) {
  Serial.println("🛑 Both gas sensors disconnected. Skipping gas readings.\n");
} else {
  if (!coConnected || !methaneConnected) {
    Serial.println("⚠ One or more gas sensors disconnected.");
  } else {
    Serial.println("✅ Both gas sensors connected.");
  }

  // === Gas Readings ===
  Serial.println("===== 🧪 Gas Sensor Readings =====");
  int coReading = analogRead(SENSOR_CO) * correctionFactorCO;
  int methaneReading = analogRead(SENSOR_METHANE) * correctionFactorMethane;

  Serial.print("🔥 CO (A): "); Serial.println(coReading);
  Serial.print("🏭 Methane (B): "); Serial.println(methaneReading);

  if (coReading > CO_THRESHOLD) {
    Serial.println("🚨 High CO! Evacuate!");
    dangerDetected = true;
  } else {
    Serial.println("✅ CO level normal.");
  }

  if (methaneReading > METHANE_THRESHOLD) {
    Serial.println("🚨 High Methane! Explosion risk!");
    dangerDetected = true;
  } else {
    Serial.println("✅ Methane level normal.");
  }
}

// === DHT22 Temperature and Humidity ===
Serial.println("===== 🌡 Temp & Humidity (DHT22) =====");
```