1. Introduction

The southwest monsoon (SWM) is the world’s most important monsoon system that affects nearly one third of the world population. The SWM maintains a periodicity annually in which more than 80% of the annual precipitation occurs during June–September and represents significant spatial and temporal variation which is dependent upon climatic and topographical features of the Indian subcontinent. The spatial and temporal interannual variability of Indian summer monsoon rainfall (ISMR) leads to large-scale drought and flood, resulting in a major effect on agriculture and the economy of the country (Guhathakurta & Rajeevan, 2006; Naidu et al., 2015; Parthasarathy et al., 1994; Turner & Annamalai, 2012). The strong influence of the Tropical Ocean on the variability of ISMR has been studied and epitomized by the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomena (Shukla, 1987; Sikka, 1980; Webster & Yang, 1992). ENSO is a phenomenon of coupled ocean–atmosphere used to explain unusual climatic and weather patterns and also disrupt the ecosystem, agriculture, tropical cyclone, drought and flood, and other extreme weather events across the globe. The large-scale ocean–atmosphere climate interaction is linked to the periodic warming in the sea surface temperature (SST) across central and east equatorial Pacific Ocean termed as El Nino. On the other hand, La Nina (a cold event) represents

Performance of RegCM4 for Dynamically Downscaling of El Nino/La Nina Events During Southwest Monsoon Over India and Its Regions

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Abstract This study presents the interannual variation in the summer monsoon rainfall during the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phases, that is, El Nino and La Nina throughout the Indian subcontinent and its subregions during 1986–2010. The analysis includes the performance assessments of the regional climate model (RegCM4) in simulating Indian summer monsoon rainfall through comparison with India Meteorological Department rainfall data. Observation clearly demonstrates that the El Nino/La Nina produced weaker/strong monsoon rainfall over India and it increases the interannual variability of the southwest monsoon. The capability and skill of RegCM4’s Grell and Mix99 cumulus parameterization scheme in simulating Indian summer monsoon rainfall associated with extreme climate are usually higher in “dry” conditions rather below average for the accurate simulation of “wet” conditions. Also, model performance was good in defining the characteristics, spatial distribution, and trend of a dry spell during ENSO phases with observation. The model-simulated spatial and temporal value of wet spell during ENSO produces overestimated value over all India.

Plain Language Summary This study has been performed with the motivation of understanding the southwest monsoon drought/flood characteristics associated with El Nino and La Nina events. Climate change variability studies are of utmost importance for the planning of agriculture and economic policy. With this motivation, an attempt has been made to study the distinguishing features of Indian summer monsoon rainfall during El Nino and La Nina years over the Indian subcontinent and its subregions with Regional Climate Model (RegCM4). The finding of our study highlights the capability and skill of RegCM4’s Grell cumulus parameterization scheme in simulating Indian summer monsoon associated with extreme climate are usually higher in “dry” condition rather below average for the accurate simulation of “wet” condition. The index of maximum count of consecutive dry days and consecutive wet days helps in accessing the deficient/excess rainfall over a regionalized and localized area.

Citation: Verma, S., & Bhatla, R. (2021). Performance of RegCM4 for dynamically downscaling of El Nino/La Nina events during southwest monsoon over India and its regions. Earth and Space Science, 8, e2020EA001474. https://doi.org/10.1029/2020EA001474

Received 24 SEP 2020
Accepted 16 JAN 2021

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a period of below average SST across east central equatorial Pacific. Extreme El Niño severely disrupts
global weather patterns affecting the ecosystem, agriculture, tropical cyclone, drought and flood, and
other extreme weather events worldwide. It is well known that ENSO plays a prominent mode on the
interannual scale to modulate the rainfall variability which influences the dry and wet conditions over
the Indian subcontinent (Sahai et al., 2003). Initially, the association of El Niño and failures of ISMR
was highlighted by Sikka (1980). Many studies have established that the El Niño/La Nina events are
generally associated with dry (warm)/wet (cold) phase of the SWM (Ashok et al., 2004; Kripalani &
Kulkarni, 2001; Walker, 1925). The study of Rajeevan et al. (2012) explained the association in the inter-
annual variability of northeast monsoon over south peninsular India which is significantly linked with
the phases and strengthening of ENSO and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). Further, Sanap et al. (2019)
explained the occurrence of heavy rainfall during El Niño phase and is weaker during La Nina and neu-
tral phase in northeast monsoon. In recent decades, relationship between ISMR and ENSO weakened
(C. P. Chang et al., 2001; Kumar et al., 1999). Previously, the weakening variability of ISMR and ENSO
explained with the modulation of Indian Ocean dipole (IOD) (Ashok et al., 2004; Saji et al., 1999;
Yang et al., 2007) and amplification of North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) (Chang et al., 2001). Also, Cai
et al. (2014) explained the occurrence of frequent cases of El Niño and La Nina after 2003 which is a
result of the increased frequency of atmospheric convection in the eastern equatorial region due to the
response of global warming. Therefore, in the global warming scenario, it is indeed important to ex-
amine how the ENSO–monsoon relationship changes in future climate and to understand the possible
changes in the predictability of monsoon rainfall.

The Global Climate Models (GCMs) and Regional Climate Models (RCMs) can be used to simulate climate
information about past, present, and future climate conditions. The coarse resolution of GCM which is
hundreds of kilometers can cause inadequate simulation to epitomize the regional/local topographic fea-
tures and mesoscale weather phenomena. Previous studies have shown that GCMs were not able to capture
accurate and seamless simulation of the complex SWM system, due to the coarse resolution (X. J. Gao
et al., 2001; Kripalani et al., 2007; Sabin et al., 2013). The existing state-of-the-art GCMs still have difficul-
ties in simulating the subseasonal variability associated with Asian summer monsoon (Lin et al., 2008) and
still this is a challenging to accurately simulate the interannual and intraseasonal climatological mecha-
nism and phenomena such as, Madden–Julian oscillation and convectively coupled equatorial wave (Hung
et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2006) in climate model.

Whereas, the dynamical downscale approach of RCM can improve the horizontal resolution (finer
resolution) and able to simulate more detailed climate information about its physical processes and
atmospheric dynamics (Giorgi, 2019; Giorgi et al., 2012). In this study, state-of-the-art RegCM (version
4) has been used to dynamically downscale the summer monsoon system over the South Asian Coor-
dinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment (SA CORDEX) domain (Bhatla et al., 2016, 2018;
Bhatla, Mandal, et al., 2019). The RegCM developed by the Earth System Physics group of the Abdus
Salam International Center for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Italy, has been widely used for simulating
the past and future monsoon climatic system over the globe in the last 2 decades (N. Davis et al., 2009;
X. Gao et al., 2012; Giorgi et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2013; Pal et al., 2007; Sylla et al., 2013). Previous-
ly, a large set of sensitivity experiments have been conducted using different cumulus parameteriza-
tion schemes (CPSs), horizontal resolution, selection of domain, and effect of different land surface
schemes to validating and verifying the RegCM simulation to understand the interannual and intra-
seasonal variability of SWM over India (Ashfaq et al., 2009; Bhatla et al., 2016, 2020; Dash et al., 2006,
2015; Ghosh et al., 2019; Nayak et al., 2019; Raju et al., 2015; Ratnam et al., 2009; Sinha et al., 2013).
It is indeed important for RCM to understand the impact and severity of extreme climate association
with modulator ENSO and IOD. The capability of RCM in representing the relationship between ENSO
and rainfall has been performed over various regions of the South America (Da Rocha et al., 2014; Seth
et al., 2007). Arini et al. (2015) state that the RegCM4 can explain rainfall type, the rainfall character-
istics during ENSO over Kalimantan, Indonesia, which is characterized by deficient/excess rainfall El
Niño/La Nina. However, the RCM capability in simulating the link between model and observation
during ENSO is not competent (Ratnam et al., 2013). The study of Aldrian et al. (2007) depicts that to
simulate/forecast the ENSO related rainfall anomalies, the model skill is higher in the dry season than

VERMA AND BHATLA
Earth and Space Science

Thus, it is noteworthy to evaluate the performance assessments of the RCM dynamical downscale output to understand the association of ENSO with climate extreme at the regional and local scale.

The understanding of the SWM drought/flood characteristics associated with El Nino and La Nina events is of utmost importance for the planning agriculture and economic policy (M. Davis, 2001; Selvaraju, 2003). With this motivation, an attempt has been made to study the distinguishing features of ISMR during El Nino and La Nina years over the Indian subcontinents and its subregions. Also, the performance assessments of RegCM4’s different CPSs have been done to simulating ISMR over India and its subregions during El Nino and La Nina events. The structure of the paper is as follows. The model descriptions are briefly described in Section 2. Section 3 described the data used in the study along with the methodology. In Section 4, detailed analysis has been explained, while Section 5 draws the paper together with conclusions.

2. Model Description

The stable version 4.0 of the Abdus Salam ICTP’s RegCM4.3 has been used in this study. The state-of-the-art in the RCM RegCM has contributed significantly to the scientific society toward the study of climate change and its variability (Giorgi, 2006; Giorgi et al., 2012). To validate the model performance during El Nino and La Nina events, 25 years simulation with perfect lateral boundary condition of ECMWF’s ERA-Interim reanalysis (Simmons, 2006) and NOAA’s Weekly Optimum Interpolation SST (Reynolds et al., 2007) was conducted for the period of 1986–2010. The SA CORDEX domain (22°S–50°N; 10°E–130°E) has been selected as model domain with 50 km horizontal resolution with 18 sigma vertical levels. The RegCM4 is a hydrostatic limited area model, compressible, sigma-p vertical coordinate model with Arakawa B-grid system. The model implemented the Holtslag scheme (Holtslag et al., 1990) as planetary boundary layer schemes which is based on a nonlocal diffusion concept that takes into account countergradient fluxes in an unstable, well-mixed atmosphere. The radiation scheme is NCAR’s Community Climate Model version 3 (CCM3); land surface parameterization given by Biosphere–Atmosphere Transfer Scheme (BATS Ie). The Subgrid explicit moisture scheme (SUBEX) is used for the large-scale precipitation scheme (Pal et al., 2000). The RegCM4 has four mainly available CPSs are, Grell scheme (Grell, 1993) with closure assumption of the Arakawa and Schubert, MIT (Emanuel, 1991), Kuo (Anthes, 1977), and Tiedtke (1989) and two mixed convection scheme (Emanuel

| Table 1  | Model (RegCM4.3) Configuration Used in the Study |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Resolution | 50 km horizontal |
| Map projection | ROTMER |
| Vertical level | 18 sigma vertical levels |
| **Physics parametrization** | **Scheme/model** | **Reference** |
| Radiation scheme | Community Climate Model version 3 (CCM3) | Kiehl et al. (1996) |
| Land surface model | Biosphere–Atmosphere Transfer Scheme (BATS Ie) | Dickinson et al. (1993) |
| Planetary boundary layer | Modified Holtslag | Holtslag et al. (1990); Holtslag and Boville (1993) |
| Convective Precipitation Schemes | (1) Modified-Kuo scheme | Anthes (1977); Grell (1993); Emanuel (1991); Tiedtke (1989) |
| | (2) Grell scheme | |
| | (3) MIT-Emanuel scheme | |
| | (4) Tiedtke | |
| Large-Scale Precipitation Scheme | Subgrid explicit moisture scheme (SUBEX) | Pal et al. (2000) |
| Ocean surface flux scheme | Zeng’s scheme | Zeng et al. (1998) |
over land; Grell over ocean [Mix98] and Emanuel over ocean; Grell over land [Mix99]) mentioned in Table 1.

3. Data Description and Methodology

For the performance assessment of the RegCM4, the model-simulated climate data compared with observation data of India Meteorological Department (IMD), which provided daily gridded rainfall data set (IMD4) at a high spatial resolution (0.25° × 0.25°) (Pai et al., 2014) for a period from 1986 to 2010. The rainfall data over the Indian subcontinent (6.5°N–37.5°N; 66.5°E–101.5°E) were considered for interpolating to gridded rainfall data (Rajeevan & Bhate, 2009). In this study, daily and monthly rainfall data are analyzed for the Indian summer monsoon period (June–September).

The El Nino years were identified based on the June–September average SST anomaly over the Nino3.4 region. The identification of ENSO years and climatology distribution of rainfall based on Nino3.4 SST anomaly index (5°S–5°N, 120°W–170°W) during Northern Hemispheric summer (June–September: JJAS) 1986–2010.

As per the definition, El Nino refers to a situation where five consecutive 3 months moving average Oceanic Nino Index Average (ONIA) values above 0.5 °C, whereas for the La Nina condition the ONIA value is below −0.5 °C (Table 2). The drought and flood year and its association with El Nino and La Nina were identified based on the percentage departure of ISMR anomalies. A year is defined as a drought/flood year when the standardized departure (SD) is less/more than −1 or +1, respectively. For the climate modeling perspective, a high-resolution dynamical downscaling with the resolution was set up in RegCM4 over the SA CORDEX domain. The simulation of ENSO events using six convection schemes of RegCM4.3 has been done during the period of 1986–2010. The interannual variability of rainfall associated with El Nino and La Nina is stud-

| El Nino | La Nina | Neutral |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1986a   | 1988b   | 1989    |
| 1987b   | 1995    | 1990    |
| 1991b   | 1998b   | 1992    |
| 1994c   | 1999b   | 1993    |
| 1997c   | 2000    | 1996    |
| 2002d   | 2005    | 2001    |
| 2004    | 2007b   | 2003    |
| 2006    | 2008    |         |
| 2009a   | 2010b   |         |

aModerate. bStrong. cVery strong.

Table 2
List of Onset Year of El Nino, La Nina, and Neutral Year

Figure 1. Model domain and topography (in meter) consider for the study. Black rectangular box denotes South Asian CORDEX domain (22°S–50°N; 10°E–130°E) and R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5 are the domain for the five subregions of India, namely, Northwest India, Northcentral India, Western Peninsular India, Eastern Peninsular India, and Southern Peninsular India, respectively. CORDEX, Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment.
ied by comparing observed gridded rainfall data set of IMD over India and its subregions as Northwest India (R1), Northcentral India (R2), Western peninsular India (R3), Eastern peninsular India (R4), and Southern peninsular India (R5) (Figure 1) (Bhatla et al., 2019). The selection of best fit model CPS has been done Skill Score (Zou et al., 2014). The least values of skill score signify the best fit CPS for model simulation for El Nino and La Nina years:

$$\text{skill score} = \log \left( \frac{4 \left( \frac{\sigma_o}{\sigma_m} + \frac{\sigma_m}{\sigma_o} \right)^2}{(1 + r)^3} \right)$$

where $\sigma_o$ and $\sigma_m$ are standard deviations of observation and model simulation, respectively, and $r$ is the correlation coefficient between them.

Thereafter, consecutive dry days (CDDs) (below 1 mm rainfall) and consecutive wet days (CWDs) (more than 1 mm rainfall) are calculated and used in the result analysis during El Nino and La Nina over five selected subregions of India. The CDD, defined as the maximum number of CDDs with daily precipitation below 1 mm. And, the CWD define as the maximum number of wet days with daily precipitation equal to or more than 1 mm.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Regional Characteristics of Summer Monsoon Rainfall Patterns in India and Their Relations With Nino3.4 SST Anomaly

The time series of ISMR which is expressed as SD of seasonal (JJAS) summer monsoon rainfall from the normal has been analyzed with Nino3.4 SST anomaly (Figures 2a–2f). The strongest negative correlation coefficient has been obtained, that is, $-0.51$ in between the standardized all India summer monsoon (AISMR) and Nino3.4 SST anomaly for the period 1986–2010. During the climatological period of 1986–2010, years 1986, 1987, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2009 are categorized as onset El Nino years based on positive ONI (above 0.5°C). On the other hand, the negative ONI (below −0.5°C) declared the La Nina years such as 1988, 1995, 1998–2000, 2005, 2007, 2008, and 2010. The strength of El Nino and La Nina events has been mentioned in Table 2. From the observed AISMR association with Nino3.4 SST, it has been observed that the frequent cases of El Nino and La Nina have occurred after 2003. This finding has been related to the response of global warming, thus, the increased frequency of atmospheric convection in the eastern equatorial region has been observed (Cai et al., 2014), so that frequent cases of El Nino and La Nina have occurred. The time series of standardized rainfall also explains the flood (greater than 1 SD) and drought years (less than 1 SD) which are associated with the occurrence of El Nino and La Nina years. During this period, all the five drought years (1986, 1987, 2002, 2004, and 2009) in India are coincide with El Nino years, that is, 5 out of 9 years (55%) which supported by the study Kripalani and Kulkarni (1997) that is most of the droughts are connected with El Nino episodes. The phenomena of drought could be explained by the finding of Kripalani et al. (1996), the positive SST anomaly for five consecutive 3 months average trigger the enhancement of anomalous tropical convection across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific and suppressed/inhibit the convection over the western Pacific. On the other hand, the major flood condition over India are, that is, 1988, 1994, 2005, 2006, and 2007 (33%) in which three major flood years are associated with the La Nina years, that is, 1988, 2005, and 2007 except 1994 and 2006 which are moderate and weak El Nino years (Table 3). So it a fact that the association of significant Dipole Mode Index (DMI) suppresses the effect of El Nino year (1994) (Saji et al., 1999) and causes the flood-like condition over India mainly over Northwest, Northcentral, and Western peninsular India. A significant year to year variability of AISMR has been observed in Figure 2a. The strong inverse relationship of AISMR with Nino3.4 ONI Index has been observed during 1987 (strong El Nino), 1988 (strong La Nina), 1997 (very strong El Nino), 2002 (moderate El Nino), and 2009 (moderate El Nino) for AISMR. In Figures 2b–2f, relationship of Nino3.4 SST anomaly has been studied with the observed summer monsoon rainfall over important five subregion of India, that is, R1–R5. The climatology and topography of these subregions are unique in nature. So that the distribution summer monsoon rainfall is not evenly over these regions. In the R1 region, AISMR correlation...
Earth and Space Science

The time series of Indian summer monsoon rainfall (expressed as the departure of seasonal summer monsoon rainfall from the normal)—(a) for all India region: AI, (b) for Northwest India: R1, (c) for Northcentral India: R2, (d) for Western Peninsular India: R3, (e) for Eastern Peninsular India: R4, and (f) for Southern Peninsular India: R5 with Nino3.4 SST anomaly (1986–2010).

Figure 2. (a–f) The time series of Indian summer monsoon rainfall (expressed as the departure of seasonal summer monsoon rainfall from the normal)—(a) for all India region: AI, (b) for Northwest India: R1, (c) for Northcentral India: R2, (d) for Western Peninsular India: R3, (e) for Eastern Peninsular India: R4, and (f) for Southern Peninsular India: R5 with Nino3.4 SST anomaly (1986–2010).

with the Nino3.4 SST is the $-0.32$ that means the inverse correlation is moderate in the nature. The drought year for the Northwest region is 1987, 2000, 2002, and 2009 which are strongly associated with the El Nino years (Figure 2b). Two major flood years have been identified over the R1 region, that is, 1990 and 1994 neutral year and El Nino year, respectively. The interpretation of 25-year climatology indicated that the
Table 3
Association of Drought and Flood With El Nino and La Nina Years for All India and Its Subregions

| Region   | Drought       | Flood       |
|----------|---------------|-------------|
| All India| 1986, 1987, 2002, 2004, 2009 | 1988, 1994, 2005, 2006, 2007 |
| R1       | 1987, 2000, 2002, 2009 | 1990, 1994   |
| R2       | 2002, 2004, 2009, 2010 | 1994, 1999, 2003 |
| R3       | 1986, 1987     | 1988, 2005   |
| R4       | 1987, 2002, 2004, 2009 | 1994, 2006, 2010 |
| R5       | 2002, 2003     | 1988, 1996, 2007 |

Note. Performance of RegCM4 for dynamically downscaling of El Nino/La Nina events during southwest monsoon over India and its regions. Italic: associated with El Nino years; Bold: associated with La Nina years; Bold & Italic: associated with neutral years.

The spatial distribution of average SWM rainfall during El Nino years, that is, 1986, 1987, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2009 are delineated in Figure 3. The observed (IMD) monsoon rainfall spatial distri-
bution and variability have been studied over India and its different subregions such as R1–R5 during El Niño years (Figure 3a). The observed rainfall pattern depicts two major rain deficient zones which are the northern part of the western region and the southern part of Eastern Ghats (denoted as a red dotted circle in Figure 3a). The decrease in the monsoon rainfall over the Indian region was supported by Turner and Annamalai (2012) and Varikoden et al. (2015) during the post-1950s. The frequent occurrence of ENSO events in the post-1990s might be a reason behind the decrease in monsoon rainfall. The association of ENSO is causing dry/wet monsoon during El Niño and La Niña, respectively. These regions received less than 2 mm/day average monsoon rainfall during El Niño years. The core monsoon region shows the average rainfall between 8 and 16 mm/day during El Niño events. The maximum average monsoon rainfall was received by western at and northeast regions, that is, more than 16 mm/day. The RCM (RegCM4) simulation for SWM rainfall using different CPSs, that is, Kuo, Tiedtke, Mix98, Emanuel, Grell, and Mix99 is compared with the observed data set of IMD rainfall during El Niño years (Figures 3a–3g). The monsoonal rainfall variability over the Indian subcontinent is well captured by Kuo, Grell, and Mix99 CPSs of RegCM4 against observed rainfall. The intensity rainfall over the core monsoon region and the northeast region is not captured by RegCM4. The model performance in simulating monsoon rainfall using Tiedtke and Emanuel CPSs is not up to confidence level to consider for further study.

Figures 4a–4g represent the SWM rainfall over the Indian subcontinent during nine La Niña events (1986–2010). The spatial distribution and variability of rainfall are analyzed with observed IMD rainfall (Figure 4a) and compared with the RegCM4-simulated rainfall over the Indian domain (Figures 4b–4g). During the La Niña years, India received a surplus amount of rainfall over Western Ghats (more than 20 mm/day), Northeast region (8–20 mm/day), central India (8–12 mm/day), and foothills of the Himalaya (8–12 mm/day). It could be analyzed that eastern peninsular India received the maximum average distribution of monsoon rainfall during La Niña as compared to the El Niño years. The climatology of summer monsoon rainfall over India during La Niña years reveals that a huge expanse of rainfall is located over the foothills of the Himalayas. Also, the foothills of the Himalayan including Indo Gangetic plain is experiencing the moderate to heavy monsoon rainfall, which is absent during the El Niño years. The above-mentioned two major drought-prone zones during El Niño years were missing during the La Nina years. That means the
teleconnection climatic condition brings the good monsoon rainfall over the drought-prone regions. The spatial variability of observed monsoon rainfall compared with the model-simulated rainfall during June–September. The model simulation composite plot consists of the six CPS simulation, that is, Kuo, Tiedtke, Mix98, Emanuel, Grell, and Mix99 which is showing the monsoon rainfall over the Indian subcontinent. Similar to the previous results, the Kuo-, Grell-, and Mix99-simulated monsoon rainfall are closer to the observed rainfall. All India mean monsoon climatology is well simulated by the model selected CPSs except over the core monsoon region. The Model capability is good in simulating the orographic rainfall over the Western Ghats except the central plateau region.

### 4.3. Percentage Rainfall Departure During El Nino and La Nina Years

The capabilities of the model to capture changes in the summer monsoon rainfall over the Indian subcontinent during two extreme cases El Nino and La Nina have been analyzed in terms of percentage rainfall departure from the normal (Figures 5 and 6), respectively. The above explanations prove that the Indian drought is mostly associated with the El Nino episode, the spatial distribution of rainfall departure during the El Nino events shows that its effect is more regionalized or localized in the observation data (Figure 5a). Two significant rainfall deficient zone (less than 20% rainfall from the normal) has been observed in the upper part northwest India (26°N–30°N; 72°E–80°E) and southern region (5°N–20°N; 75°E–80°E) of India. Also, some regions such as central India, lower Gangetic region, eastern peninsula, and Western Ghats have received more than the normal rainfall (more than 20% rainfall from the normal). Hence, the observed feature of monsoon rainfall departure during El Nino years has been compared with the model simulation, in which the Grell and Mix98 CPS simulations were closer to the observation. Otherwise, complex and advance CPSs such that Tiedtke and Emanuel show very large rainfall departure from the observation (i.e., less than 30%). In Figures 6a–6g, the Indian summer rainfall percentage departure from the normal has been plotted during La Nina years. The observed ISMR pattern during the La Nina episode shows a distinguished nature of excessive rainfall departure (in the range of 20–30; exactly opposite from the El Nino episode) in two regions which is the Himalaya region (26°N–35°N; 70°E–80°E) and southern region of India. In the western peninsular region (localized over Mumbai), excessive rainfall, that is, more than 50% from the normal rainfall has been observed during the La Nina episode. On the other hand, central India was received less than average/normal rainfall during the La Nina years (1986–2010). The RegCM4’s CPSs
(Mix98 and Mix99) were able to simulate some of the distinguishing features of ISMR departure during the La Nina (Figures 6b–6g). The CPSs Kuo and Grell were showing the negative ISMR departure than normal, on the other hand the Emanuel and Tiedtke show the excessive rainfall departure from the normal. Thus, the observation and model simulation proves that the El Nino/La Nina produced weaker/strong monsoon

Figure 5. (a–g) Same as Figure 3, except for percentage summer monsoon rainfall departure from accumulated ISMR during El Nino years. ISMR, Indian summer monsoon rainfall.

Figure 6. (a–g) Same as Figure 3, except for percentage summer monsoon rainfall departure from accumulated ISMR during La Nina years. ISMR, Indian summer monsoon rainfall.
over India and its subregions which may induce or accelerate the intraseasonal and interannual variability of the SWM rainfall.

The above analysis shows that the model simulation of ISMR during El Nino and La Nina episode is sensitive to the selection of CPSs. The Grell scheme efficiently improve the performance because of the triggering mechanism (the lifted parcel attains moist convection) and no direct mixing occurs between the cloudy air and the environment air except at the top and bottom of the circulations (Grell, 1993). That is why the Grell and Mix99 are best CPSs to represent spatial and temporal variability of the ISMR during El Nino and La Nina period. On the other hand, the performance of complex scheme such as Emanuel and Tiedtke affected in the extreme condition (strong El Nino and La Nina) which involves the episodic and inhomogeneous mixing of cloud (Emanuel, 1991) and parameterizes the tropical deep convection (Bao et al., 2013), respectively, as the triggering mechanism processes in simulating the precipitation. The model-simulated average ISMRs over all India and different subregions were compared with the observation data of IMD for El Nino and La Nina year (Figure 7). In the El Nino and La Nina years, model’s Grell CPSs simulation was closed to the observation for region R1 and all India. In the R2 and R4 regions, the model simulation is underestimated the actual rainfall. The model simulation over the southern peninsular was overpredicted by the Grell, Emanuel, Mix98, and Mix99 CPSs. Thus, it is difficult to select one single CPS to simulate perfect ISMR over India due to complex climatology and regionalized topographical differences. However, a unique skill score has been evaluated to access the performance of all model’s CPS based on standard deviation and correlation coefficient between observation and model simulation (1986–2010) (Figure 8). The region-wise evaluation of skill score presents a comprehensive view of model skill in the seamless simulation of ISMR over the Indian subcontinent. Based on the least value of skill score, the Grell CPS is best in simulating the spatial, temporal, and correlation characteristics of observation during El Nino and La Nina. The maximum

![Figure 7](image-url) Average summer monsoon rainfall of IMD data and cumulus convection schemes during El Nino and La Nina year over India and its subregions. IMD, India Meteorological Department.

![Figure 8](image-url) Schematic skill score of cumulus parameterized scheme of RegCM4 over the Indian subcontinent and its five subregions during El Nino and La Nina years, respectively.
value of the Skill score was shown by the Emanuel and Tiedtke schemes over all subregions. The performance of Kuo and Mix99 CPSs is the second best and could be acceptable in terms of skill score. So that further analysis of characteristics dry spell and wet spell during the El Nino and La Nina has been done using RegCM4’s Grell CPS and the observation data.

### 4.4. Defining the Characteristic, Spatial Distribution, and Trend of Dry Spell and Wet Spell During ENSO With Model and Observation

The spatial plot for average CDD (below 1 mm) during ISM and its trend for observation and RegCM4’s Grell CPS have been analyze during El Nino (Figures 9a–9d) and La Nina years (Figures 10a–10d), respectively. The term maximum CDD is used as an index to assess the deficient rainfall or drought over a region (Field et al., 2012; Frich et al., 2002; Zhang et al., 2011). The observation data show that the spatial distribution of maximum average CDD (more than 50 CDD) over the eastern Himalaya, northwest region, and the Eastern Ghats of the southern peninsula (Figure 9a) during El Nino years. Also, CDD spatial trend is supplementary to show that its trend is increasing over eastern Himalaya, eastern Indo Gangetic plain (IGP), and Eastern Ghats of the southern peninsula and eastern peninsular part of India (more than 1 CDD/year). On the other hand, the maximum CDD over the Northwest region shows a decreasing trend of 1 CDD/year during El Nino years. The Grell CPS-simulated ISMR is showing the spatial distribution of maximum CDD
over central India (30–35 CDD). During the La Nina years, the average CDD distribution is lesser than El Nino years over northwest India and southern India. The model performance is not up to mark to represent the spatial distribution of CDD over India. The model-simulated CDD during El Nino and La Nina is not evenly distributed as the observation but the temporally average distribution of CDD is well simulated by the Grell CPS (Figure 13a) with minimum error (Figure 10).

The average wet spell has been calculated as the CWD (equal and above 1 mm) for ISMR during El Nino and La Nina, respectively (Figures 11a–11d and 12a–12d). The IMD data illustrate the spatial variability of CWD and its trend in Figures 11a and 11b. The maximum average CWD is located over the Western Ghats and northeast India, that is, above 40 CWD during El Nino years. Over central India, the CWD lies in between the range of 15–25. The spatial trend of El Nino CWD depicts an increasing trend over the Western Ghats region and Uttarakhand which is more than 3 CWD/year during El Nino years. Also, interesting features have been analyzed with the observation that during El Nino trend of CWD was decreasing over upper northeast India (less than 2 CWD/year). The extent of the wet spell (CWD) and its trend has been increasing over the high rainfall region during ISM (La Nina), that is, over central India, Western Ghats, eastern Himalaya, and northeast India (Figures 12a and 12b). The model Grell CPS was overestimating the average CWD and
its trend value over India and its subregions during ENSO events. Also, the temporal distribution of CWD over subregions of India is overestimating the value by 3 times the observation (Figure 13b). The study of Aldrian et al. (2007) depicts that to simulate/forecast the ENSO related rainfall anomalies, the model skill is higher in the dry season than the rainy season. That is why the wet spell simulated in the model is relatively higher than the observation. The application of systematic bias correction will help in the accurate simulation of the occurrence and frequency of wet spells in the RCM.

Comprehensively, it is an important factor to consider the spatial and temporal variability and trend of CDD and CWD for ISMR. This study of observational and model trends of CDD and CWD indicates that El Nino and La Nina episodes can modulate the probability of occurrences and length of wet spell and dry spell in such a way to produce weak or strong monsoon years over different subregions of India.

5. Conclusions
In this study, the interannual variation in the precipitation during the ENSO phases, that is, El Nino and La Nina throughout the Indian subcontinent and its subregions has been done. The consistent spatial and temporal modulation of monsoon precipitation has been observed with the help of IMD.
and model simulation which is significantly associated with the El Nino and will highly affect the regions of upper northwest India (26°N–30°N; 72°E–80°E), Eastern Ghats of the southern peninsular region (5°N–20°N; 75°E–80°E), and northeast India. On the other hand, during La Nina, ISMR departure from the mean rainfall was excess in the Himalaya region (26°N–35°N; 70°E–80°E), western peninsular region (localized over Mumbai; more than 50% from the normal rainfall), and southern region of India. This can be concluding as the frequent and prolong occurrences La Nina events will associate future flood-like conditions in the above-mentioned regions. The capability and skill of RegCM4’s Grell CPS-simulated rainfall during La Nina, respectively. ISMR, Indian summer monsoon rainfall; CWD, consecutive wet day; IMD, India Meteorological Department; CPS, cumulus parameterization scheme.

![Figure 12](image) (a–d) Spatial plot for consecutive wet days (equal and above 1 mm) during ISMR. (a and b) Average CWD and its trend for observed rainfall data of IMD during La Nina, respectively. (c and d) CWD and its trend for RegCM4’s Grell CPS-simulated rainfall during La Nina, respectively. ISMR, Indian summer monsoon rainfall; CWD, consecutive wet day; IMD, India Meteorological Department; CPS, cumulus parameterization scheme.
**Figure 13.** (a and b) The average CDD and CWD of IMD and Grell CPS of RegCM4 during El Nino and La Nina over different subregions of India. CDD, consecutive dry day; CWD, consecutive wet day; IMD, India Meteorological Department; CPS, cumulus parameterization scheme.

**Data Availability Statement**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD)'s observed daily gridded rainfall data (IMD4) from 1986 to 2010 at a high spatial resolution (0.25° x 0.25°) have been used in this study over Indian domain which are available through the “Data Supply Portal” on payment basis (http://dsp.imdpune.gov.in/). These data are supplied as per IMD’s data charging policy by National Data Center IMD, Pune. For initializing and boundary condition, the RegCM4 model, 6 hourly of ECMWF’s ERA-Interim reanalysis data (resolution 1.5° x 1.5°) for air temperature, geopotential height, relative humidity, zonal, and meridional wind were collected from the site https://www.ecmwf.int/en/forecasts/datasets/reanalysis-datasets/era-interim and NOAA’s Weekly Optimum Interpolation SSTs are downloaded from the site https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/oisst for 1981–2010.

**Acknowledgments**

This work is a part of an R&D project, funded by DST, Govt. of India in the form of the Center for Excellence in Climate Change. The corresponding author would like to thank the funding support from the University Grants Commission in the form of Junior Research Fellowship. The authors are grateful to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for providing data set. Authors are thankful to ICTP, Italy, for providing RegCM4 for the dynamical downscaling.

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