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Decision-Making in Geopolitical and Hybrid Threat Environments: A Hybrid Model for Managing Economic Security

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Abstract: Objectives: This paper aims to develop a hybrid decision-making framework capable of improving organizational responses to economic insecurity and hybrid risks in complex environments. The study addresses the limitations of traditional managerial decision-making and explores the integration of structured military approaches. **Prior Work:** The research builds on theories of bounded rationality (Simon, 1997), adaptive decision-making, and crisis management, as well as on the structured logic of the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP), widely used in high-risk environments. **Approach:** The study employs a qualitative and conceptual methodology, based on comparative analysis between military and civilian decision-making models and on interdisciplinary synthesis from strategic management, public administration, and security studies. **Results:** The paper proposes a Hybrid Decision-Making Model (HDMM) that integrates structured analysis, scenario development, and adaptive feedback mechanisms. The model enhances decision coherence, reduces cognitive bias, and improves resilience in complex environments. **Implications:** The findings are relevant for academics, policymakers, and institutional leaders, offering a framework applicable in public administration, critical infrastructure management, and economic security governance. **Value:** The paper contributes a novel interdisciplinary model that bridges military and civilian decision-making, offering both theoretical advancement and practical applicability in managing hybrid risks.

Keywords: resilience; risk management; economic security; governance; uncertainty

JEL Classification: D81, H12, M10

1. Introduction

The contemporary global environment is increasingly shaped by geopolitical instability, economic disruptions, and the growing prevalence of hybrid threats. These dynamics redefine the traditional boundaries between economic security, national security, and international relations, creating complex decision-making environments for both public institutions and strategic organizations. In this context, decision-making is no longer limited to managerial efficiency but becomes a core component of geopolitical resilience and institutional adaptability.

The growing importance of resilience and coordinated decision-making has been formally recognized at both European Union and NATO levels, where economic security and hybrid threats are increasingly treated as interconnected strategic challenges (European Commission, 2022; NATO, 2016).

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Traditional managerial decision-making models are frequently insufficient in addressing these challenges, as they tend to rely on linear assumptions and incomplete analytical frameworks. In contrast, military decision-making processes have evolved to operate under conditions of uncertainty, time pressure, and high stakes, offering structured and disciplined approaches that can inform civilian practices.

This paper proposes a Hybrid Decision-Making Model designed to integrate the rigor of the Military Decision-Making Process with the flexibility required in civilian organizational contexts. The objective is to enhance decision quality in environments characterized by economic insecurity and hybrid risks.

The paper is positioned at the intersection of international relations, economic security, and strategic decision-making.

2. Related Work

The study of decision-making has evolved significantly, from classical rational models to more complex approaches that acknowledge uncertainty and cognitive limitations. Simon (1997) introduced the concept of bounded rationality, emphasizing that decision-makers operate under constraints that limit their ability to achieve optimal solutions. Later contributions, such as those of Kahneman (2011), highlighted the role of cognitive biases in shaping decisions.

In the field of strategic management, adaptive and dynamic approaches have gained prominence, particularly in response to rapidly changing environments (Teece, 2007). Crisis management literature further emphasizes the importance of structured decision-making in high-risk situations (Boin et al., 2016). At the same time, the concept of economic security has expanded to include resilience against systemic shocks and external dependencies.

The Military Decision-Making Process represents a distinct approach, characterized by structured analysis, scenario planning, and iterative evaluation. While primarily developed for military contexts, its principles offer valuable insights for improving decision-making in civilian organizations.

In recent years, the concept of hybrid threats has been increasingly associated with geopolitical competition, where economic instruments, cyber capabilities, and informational influence are used in an integrated manner. This evolution requires decision-making frameworks capable of operating across multiple domains, including economic policy, security governance, and international coordination.

At the European level, strategic frameworks emphasize the need for integrated approaches to security and economic resilience. The European Commission's Strategic Compass highlights the importance of coordinated decision-making in addressing hybrid threats, while NATO's resilience commitment underlines the role of institutional preparedness and adaptive governance in managing complex risks (European Commission, 2022; NATO, 2016).

3. Problem Statement

In the context of intensifying geopolitical competition and hybrid threat environments, civilian organizations and public institutions face significant challenges in adapting their decision-making processes to complex and rapidly evolving risks. Decision-making processes are often fragmented, reactive, and influenced by incomplete information. This creates vulnerabilities, particularly in the context of economic security and hybrid risks, where threats are multidimensional and rapidly evolving.

The problem addressed in this paper is the lack of a coherent and structured decision-making framework that can effectively integrate economic, institutional, and security considerations. The research seeks to identify how elements of military decision-making can be adapted to improve civilian processes.

4. Concept and Terms

Economic security refers to the ability of a state or organization to maintain stable access to resources, protect critical infrastructures, and withstand economic disruptions. Hybrid risks are understood as the combination of conventional and unconventional threats, including cyber-attacks, disinformation, and economic coercion.

The Military Decision-Making Process is a structured methodology designed to support planning and decision-making in complex operational environments. It emphasizes clarity, analytical rigor, and systematic evaluation of alternatives.

The Hybrid Decision-Making Model proposed in this paper combines these elements into an integrated framework tailored for civilian use.

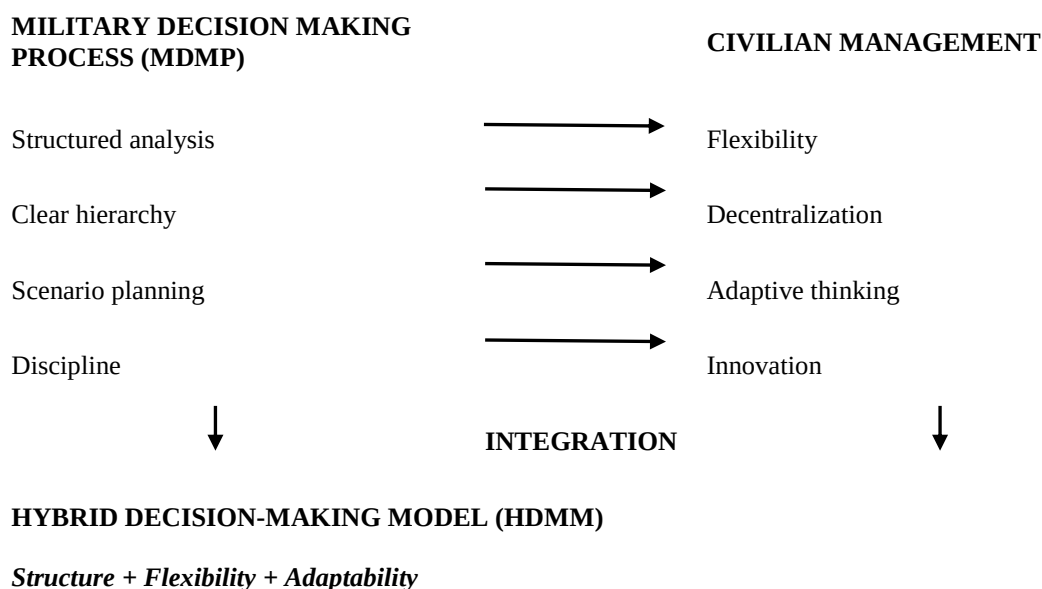


Figure 1. Integration of Military and Civilian Decision Logics

5. Solution Approach

The proposed model is based on a sequential and iterative process that begins with the clear definition of the problem and its broader context. This initial stage ensures that decision-makers fully understand the economic, institutional, and security dimensions of the issue.

The analysis phase integrates multiple sources of information, including economic indicators and risk assessments, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the environment. This is followed by the development of alternative scenarios, which allows decision-makers to explore different possible outcomes rather than relying on a single solution.

The evaluation phase introduces a multi-criteria approach that considers factors such as impact, feasibility, and risk exposure. The selected decision is then implemented, with continuous monitoring and feedback ensuring adaptability and learning.

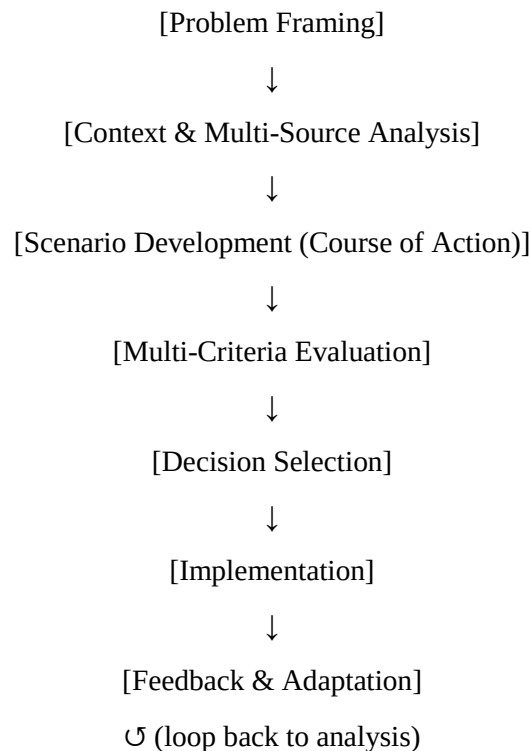


Figure 2. Hybrid Decision-Making Model (HDMM)

6. Analysis of Results

The relevance of the proposed model becomes particularly evident in the context of recent geopolitical developments, such as the war in Ukraine and its economic and security implications for the European Union. These events have demonstrated the interconnected nature of economic security, energy dependence, and strategic decision-making, highlighting the need for structured and adaptive frameworks capable of supporting coordinated responses at both national and regional levels. These developments are consistent with recent European strategic documents, which underline the need for enhanced decision-making capabilities and cross-sector coordination in response to hybrid risks and economic vulnerabilities (European Commission, 2022).

In such contexts, the proposed model facilitates a more systematic approach to decision-making, enabling organizations to anticipate risks, evaluate alternatives, and adapt strategies. Similarly, in the case of hybrid threats, the integration of diverse information sources supports a more comprehensive understanding of the operational environment.

7. Conclusions

The paper has demonstrated that traditional decision-making models are insufficient in addressing the challenges of complex environments characterized by economic insecurity and hybrid risks. The proposed Hybrid Decision-Making Model offers a structured yet flexible framework that integrates military and civilian approaches.

The model contributes to both theory and practice by providing a coherent methodology for improving decision quality and organizational resilience. Its applicability extends to public administration, critical infrastructure management, and strategic planning.

By integrating military and civilian decision-making logics within a geopolitical framework, the proposed model provides a relevant contribution to the understanding of decision-making in hybrid threat environments. It offers both a conceptual and practical tool for enhancing economic security and institutional resilience, particularly in the context of increasing global instability and strategic competition.

8. Future Work

Future research should focus on empirical validation of the model through case studies and its application in real organizational settings. Further development may also include quantitative indicators for measuring decision effectiveness and resilience.

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