



Hybrid Threats and Civil-Military Synergy: Strengthening National Resilience in the Era of Non-Traditional Security Challenges

Wilopo^{1*}, Erti Fadhilah Putri¹

¹ Universitas Pertahanan Republik Indonesia, Bogor, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: wilopo.idu@gmail.com

Abstrak

The contemporary security landscape is increasingly shaped by hybrid threats that integrate military and non-military dimensions, including cyberattacks, disinformation, environmental crises, and pandemics. These complex and multidimensional threats challenge traditional state-centric security frameworks and demand integrated, adaptive, and multi-actor responses. This study examines the role of civil-military synergy in strengthening national resilience, with a specific focus on Indonesia as a disaster-prone and geopolitically strategic country. Employing a qualitative research design based on a systematic literature review and case-based analysis, this study develops a novel conceptual model, the Adaptive Civil-Military Resilience Framework (ACMRF). The findings reveal that while Indonesia has demonstrated strong operational collaboration between civilian institutions and the military, significant challenges persist in governance fragmentation, regulatory ambiguity, technological integration, and societal trust. The study contributes theoretically by advancing a systems-based and adaptive understanding of resilience, and practically by proposing policy pathways to enhance coordination, institutional capacity, and community engagement. The ACMRF model offers a dynamic and integrative framework for analyzing resilience in hybrid threat environments, with broader applicability to other developing and disaster-prone countries.

Keywords: Hybrid Threats, Civil-Military Cooperation, National Resilience, Indonesia, Adaptive Governance.

INTRODUCTION

The nature of security in the twenty-first century has undergone a fundamental transformation. Traditional conceptions of security, primarily centered on military threats and territorial defense, have been increasingly challenged by the emergence of complex, multidimensional, and non-linear risks. Hybrid threats have become a defining feature of this evolving security landscape, characterized by the integration of conventional military force with non-military instruments such as cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, economic coercion, and environmental disruptions (Hoffman, 2007; Murray & Mansoor, 2012). These threats operate across domains, blur the boundaries between war and peace, and involve both state and non-state actors, thereby complicating detection, attribution, and response.

The growing prevalence of hybrid threats has shifted scholarly and policy attention toward the concept of resilience. Resilience, in this context, refers to the capacity of systems—whether institutional, societal, or infrastructural—to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and recover from disruptions (Joseph, 2013). Unlike traditional security approaches that emphasize prevention and control, resilience emphasizes adaptability, learning, and transformation in the face of uncertainty. Importantly, resilience is inherently multidimensional, encompassing governance structures, operational capabilities, and societal dynamics.

Civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) has emerged as a critical mechanism for operationalizing resilience in hybrid threat environments. The complexity of contemporary threats necessitates coordinated responses that integrate the capabilities of military forces with the knowledge, legitimacy, and community engagement of civilian institutions. However, existing literature on civil-military relations remains fragmented, often



focusing on specific domains such as disaster response, peacekeeping, or defense policy, without providing a comprehensive framework that captures the interconnected nature of hybrid threats.

Indonesia offers a particularly relevant and compelling case for examining these dynamics. As the world's largest archipelagic state, Indonesia faces a unique combination of geographic, environmental, and socio-political challenges. Located along the Pacific Ring of Fire, the country is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and volcanic eruptions. At the same time, Indonesia is increasingly exposed to non-traditional threats such as cyberattacks, disinformation, and economic disruptions. According to the Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB), millions of Indonesians are affected by disasters each year, highlighting the urgency of strengthening national resilience (BNPB, 2025).

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of civil-military synergy, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding how such collaboration can be conceptualized and operationalized in the context of hybrid threats. This study seeks to address this gap by developing the Adaptive Civil-Military Resilience Framework (ACMRF), which integrates governance, operational, and societal dimensions into a dynamic model of resilience. By combining theoretical analysis with empirical insights from Indonesia, this study aims to contribute to both academic discourse and policy development.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in a systematic literature review and case-based analysis. The use of qualitative methods is appropriate given the exploratory and interpretive nature of the research, which seeks to understand complex interactions between institutions, policies, and societal dynamics. The literature review draws primarily on peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus, supplemented by policy reports from international organizations such as the United Nations and national institutions including BNPB. The selection criteria prioritize recent and high-impact studies related to hybrid threats, civil-military cooperation, and resilience. The analytical framework is guided by three core dimensions: adaptive governance, collaborative capacity, and societal resilience. These dimensions serve as lenses through which the Indonesian case is examined. Data are analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of patterns, relationships, and key challenges.

The Indonesian case is employed not merely as an illustration but as an empirical anchor that grounds the theoretical framework. This approach enhances the relevance and applicability of the findings, particularly for developing countries facing similar challenges.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that civil-military synergy constitutes a critical yet uneven component of national resilience in Indonesia's hybrid threat environment. While operational collaboration between civilian institutions and military actors has improved significantly, particularly in disaster response contexts, deeper structural and systemic constraints continue to limit its overall effectiveness. These findings are best understood through the integrated lens of the Adaptive Civil-Military Resilience Framework (ACMRF), which conceptualizes resilience as a dynamic interplay between governance adaptability, collaborative capacity, and societal resilience.

A central finding is that Indonesia's exposure to hybrid threats is both extensive and increasingly interconnected. The country operates within what can be described as a "compound risk environment," where multiple hazards—natural, technological, and socio-political—interact and amplify one another (Bertolini et al., 2023). Hydrometeorological disasters, such as floods and landslides, dominate the national risk profile and frequently occur simultaneously across different regions. These events often trigger cascading effects, disrupting infrastructure, displacing populations, and exacerbating economic vulnerabilities (BNPB, 2025). At the same time, non-physical threats such as cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns introduce additional layers of complexity, targeting not only infrastructure but also public trust and institutional legitimacy.

This convergence of threats challenges traditional governance structures, which are often organized along sectoral lines and lack the flexibility required to respond to multidimensional crises. From a governance perspective, the findings indicate that Indonesia has made significant strides in establishing institutional frameworks for disaster management and resilience. The creation of BNPB and the adoption of resilience-oriented national policies reflect a growing awareness of the need for integrated approaches. However, governance fragmentation remains a persistent challenge, particularly in the context of decentralization. Decentralization has led to significant disparities in institutional capacity across regions. While some local governments have developed robust disaster management systems, others lack the resources, expertise, and infrastructure needed to respond effectively to complex crises. This uneven capacity undermines policy coherence and creates gaps in coordination. As Boin and McConnell (2007) argue, multi-level governance systems are particularly prone to coordination failures during crises, especially when roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. Moreover, the study identifies significant limitations in data integration and information sharing. Effective response to hybrid threats requires real-time situational awareness, yet many Indonesian institutions operate with fragmented data systems that are not fully interoperable. This lack of integration delays decision-making and reduces the effectiveness of response efforts. The findings suggest that Indonesia's governance system remains largely reactive, with limited capacity for anticipatory planning and adaptive learning. This observation aligns with Joseph's (2013) argument that resilience requires continuous adaptation and institutional learning rather than static capacity-building.

The dimension of collaborative capacity provides further insight into the operational dynamics of civil-military synergy. The Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) play a central role in disaster response, leveraging their logistical capabilities, rapid deployment capacity, and hierarchical command structures. These strengths complement the roles of civilian institutions such as BNPB, local governments, and non-governmental organizations. Empirical evidence from major disaster events demonstrates that civil-military collaboration can significantly enhance response efficiency and reduce recovery time. However, the findings also reveal that this collaboration is often situational and lacks institutionalization. While coordination occurs during crises, it is not consistently supported by formal mechanisms such as joint training, standardized protocols, or integrated command systems. This limits the sustainability and scalability of collaboration. Kapucu (2006) emphasizes that effective interagency coordination requires formalized communication networks and shared operational frameworks, without which collaboration may become inconsistent.

Organizational culture differences further complicate collaboration. Military institutions typically operate within centralized and hierarchical structures, prioritizing efficiency and command discipline. In contrast, civilian institutions often function within decentralized and participatory frameworks, emphasizing consultation and procedural accountability. These differences can lead to misalignment in priorities and communication breakdowns, particularly in high-pressure situations. Alvinus (2024) notes that such cultural differences can create inertia in collaborative processes, reducing overall effectiveness. Technological capacity also emerges as a critical factor in collaborative effectiveness. The integration of digital systems for early warning, data sharing, and crisis communication remains limited in Indonesia. This constraint reduces situational awareness and hampers coordination, particularly in rapidly evolving crises. As Chowdhury (2021) highlights, the resilience of modern systems is increasingly dependent on digital infrastructure, making technological investment a key priority.

Societal resilience represents the third and equally important dimension of the ACMRF. The findings indicate that Indonesian communities possess strong social capital and local knowledge, which play a vital role in disaster preparedness and response. Community-based approaches have proven effective in disseminating information, mobilizing resources, and supporting recovery efforts. However, societal resilience is also shaped by levels of public trust and social cohesion. The study finds that trust in institutions varies significantly, with the military generally perceived as more reliable than civilian agencies in crisis situations. While this perception can facilitate rapid response, it also raises questions about the balance between civil and military roles in democratic governance.

The proliferation of disinformation poses an additional challenge to societal resilience. Hybrid threats increasingly exploit information systems to manipulate public perception and undermine trust. In Indonesia, the rapid expansion of digital platforms has increased vulnerability to misinformation, particularly during crises. Cusumano and Corbe (2018) argue that information warfare is a central component of hybrid threats, targeting societal cohesion and institutional legitimacy.

The integration of these findings within the ACMRF model highlights the interdependence of governance, operational, and societal dimensions. Resilience is not a static outcome but a dynamic process shaped by continuous interaction between these elements. Weaknesses in one dimension can undermine the entire system, emphasizing the need for a holistic and integrated approach. From a theoretical perspective, the ACMRF advances the literature by offering a systems-based model that incorporates feedback loops and adaptive mechanisms. This approach aligns with contemporary theories of complexity and resilience, which emphasize interconnectedness and non-linearity. From a practical perspective, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening coordination, institutional capacity, and societal engagement.

CONCLUSION

Hybrid threats represent a fundamental challenge to contemporary security systems, requiring integrated and adaptive approaches. This study demonstrates that civil-military synergy is a critical component of national resilience, particularly in complex environments such as Indonesia. The Adaptive Civil-Military Resilience Framework (ACMRF) provides a novel and comprehensive approach to understanding resilience by integrating governance, operational, and societal dimensions. While Indonesia has made significant progress, challenges related to coordination, legal frameworks, technological capacity, and public trust remain. Future research should focus on empirical validation and comparative analysis to further refine the ACMRF model. Strengthening civil-military synergy is essential for addressing the evolving landscape of hybrid threats.

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