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The Russia–Ukraine War and Its Implications for Global Peace and Security.

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ABSTRACT: The Russia–Ukraine war has become a defining case of hybrid warfare, demonstrating the increasing integration of conventional military force with cyber operations, electronic warfare, and information manipulation. This study examines how hybrid warfare has transformed modern conflict dynamics, with particular focus on technological innovation, cyber aggression, and multidimensional battle strategies employed by both Russia and Ukraine. The study adopts a qualitative research design using content analysis of relevant literature, policy documents, cybersecurity reports, and military studies. This methodological approach allows for an in-depth interpretation of patterns in hybrid warfare strategies and their implications for contemporary security environments. Findings reveal that Ukraine's adaptive use of low-cost commercial technologies, particularly FPV drones, has significantly enhanced its tactical and operational capabilities by enabling surveillance, precision strikes, and disruption of enemy logistics. In contrast, Russia's cyber warfare operations have targeted critical infrastructure in Ukraine, including communication systems, navigation networks, and energy facilities, thereby disrupting both military coordination and civilian life. The convergence of these tactics demonstrates the integration of cyber and informational warfare with physical combat operations aimed

at weakening overall societal resilience. The study further establishes that the combination of drones, electronic warfare, and cyber capabilities signals a shift from traditional battlefield engagement to multidimensional warfare, where control over digital infrastructure is as critical as territorial dominance. Theoretically, the study is anchored in hybrid warfare theory, which explains the blending of conventional and unconventional strategies in modern conflict environments. The study concludes that hybrid warfare has fundamentally reshaped the nature of contemporary armed conflict. It highlights the growing importance of technological adaptability, innovation, and cyber resilience in determining military effectiveness. It recommends that states invest in both advanced military capabilities and resilient digital infrastructures to effectively respond to evolving hybrid threats.

Keywords: *Hybrid warfare, Russia–Ukraine war, cyber warfare, drones, electronic warfare, digital security, military innovation, content analysis, modern conflict.*

Introduction

The Russia–Ukraine war, which escalated into a full-scale invasion in February 2022, has become one of the most consequential geopolitical crises of the 21st century, exposing deep weaknesses in global peace and security systems. Rooted in long-standing historical tensions, territorial disputes, ideological differences, and competing strategic interests, the conflict has generated widespread humanitarian, economic, military, and diplomatic disruptions (Mearsheimer, 2022). Despite involvement from international bodies such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and NATO, the war has persisted, highlighting the limits of existing global governance and collective security frameworks in managing conflicts involving major powers (Sakwa, 2023).

Humanitarian consequences have been severe and far-reaching. Millions of Ukrainians have been displaced both internally and across borders, producing one of the largest refugee crises in recent history. According to UNHCR (2024), over 6.3 million Ukrainians have sought asylum abroad, while millions more remain internally displaced. Key urban centers, including Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Zaporizhzhia, have experienced extensive destruction of infrastructure, leading to shortages of food, healthcare, electricity, and essential services (BBC News, 2024).

These conditions have raised global concerns about human rights violations and the inability of international institutions to effectively protect civilians during major armed conflicts. Economically, the war has disrupted global systems through sanctions on Russia and countermeasures affecting energy and commodity flows. These actions destabilized global oil and gas markets, contributing to inflation and rising energy costs worldwide (Reuters, 2024). In addition, the disruption of Ukrainian Black Sea ports, critical for global grain exports, has intensified food insecurity, particularly in developing regions such as Africa and the Middle East that depend heavily on imported wheat and fertilizers (FAO, 2024). This demonstrates how regional conflicts can produce global ripple effects, disproportionately affecting vulnerable economies.

Military war has reshaped modern warfare through the extensive use of drones, cyber operations, long-range missiles, and information warfare. Ukraine has received significant military assistance from NATO allies, including advanced weapons systems and defense technologies (NATO, 2024), while Russia has expanded its reliance on cyber capabilities, drone warfare, and strategic partnerships with countries such as Iran and North Korea (Business Insider, 2024). The conflict has also triggered shifts in global security arrangements, including Sweden's accession to NATO and increased defense spending across Europe and Asia (Financial Times, 2024; Euronews, 2024). Meanwhile, Russia's repeated nuclear threats have heightened fears of escalation and underscored the fragility of global security systems (The Guardian, 2024). Diplomatically, multiple mediation efforts by actors such as Turkey, China, and the United Nations have failed to produce lasting peace (Al Jazeera, 2024). Ukraine maintains its position on territorial sovereignty, while Russia demands recognition of annexed territories and security guarantees (Reuters, 2024). The war has also reshaped global alliances, with China adopting a neutral but strategically aligned stance with Russia while promoting a multipolar global order (Foreign Affairs, 2024). Similarly, many countries in the Global South, including those in Africa and Latin America, have adopted neutral positions to balance diplomatic relations and economic interests (Brookings Institution, 2024). These dynamics signal a gradual shift toward a more fragmented and multipolar international system.

The prolonged conflict has exposed major gaps in international peace and security frameworks. Despite sanctions, diplomacy, and military deterrence, no sustainable resolution has been achieved, raising questions about the effectiveness of global governance structures (Sakwa, 2023). The war has also highlighted the growing role of hybrid warfare, including cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, media manipulation, and the involvement of private military actors, which complicate traditional conflict resolution approaches. At the same time, global media narratives particularly from Western outlets have strongly shaped international opinion and policy responses, though their effects on developing and non-Western countries remain underexplored (Mearsheimer, 2022; Sakwa, 2023).

Objectives of the Study

i. To examine how the Russia-Ukraine war has influenced national and subnational policy shifts in developing and non-Western regions.

ii. To assess the multidimensional effects of hybrid warfare, particularly on civilian morale, technological vulnerabilities, media influence, and social cohesion.

Review of Conceptual Literature

Theoretical Perspectives on War

The Concept of Global Peace and Security

Global peace is a complex concept that has been widely discussed by philosophers, political scientists, and sociologists for centuries. Traditionally, it refers to a condition where nations coexist without war, violence, or armed conflict. However, contemporary scholars argue that peace goes beyond the mere absence of war and includes justice, equality, security, and cooperation among nations and individuals. The Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index (2023) defines global peace as freedom from violence and the fear of violence in both domestic and international settings. Similarly, Johan Galtung distinguishes between “negative peace,” which is the absence of direct violence, and “positive peace,” which involves the presence of justice, equality, and harmonious social relationships. According to him, lasting peace can only exist when structural and cultural injustices are eliminated.

Several scholars and global leaders have further expanded the understanding of peace. Kofi Annan (1999) described global peace as peaceful coexistence among nations through dialogue and cooperation, while Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992) emphasized diplomacy, political stability, and international cooperation as foundations for peace. Mary Kaldor (2007) linked peace to socio-economic justice and human security, arguing that inequality and instability threaten sustainable peace. Likewise, Oliver Richmond (2008) stressed that peace requires the removal of direct, structural, and cultural violence, including economic injustice and social oppression. From another perspective, Samuel Huntington (1996), through the "Clash of Civilizations" theory, argued that peaceful coexistence depends on dialogue and understanding among civilizations. In contrast, Thomas Hobbes (1651/1985) viewed peace simply as the absence of war, while Quincy Wright (1942) emphasized the elimination of potential sources of conflict. Louis Kriesberg (1998) saw peace as a continuous process of reconciliation and conflict resolution. Furthermore, Daniele Archibugi (2008) connected peace with democracy and international law, while Kenneth Boulding (2000) described peace as the total elimination of violence and the establishment of a cooperative global society. Similarly, Norbert Elias (2007) associated peace with democracy, justice, and human rights protection, whereas Michael Doyle (1997) argued through democratic peace theory that democratic states are less likely to engage in war against one another.

Global security, on the other hand, refers to the collective strategies, institutions, and policies designed to protect nations and international communities from threats such as war, terrorism, arms proliferation, organized crime, and economic instability. It involves the cooperation of states and international organizations, especially the United Nations, in maintaining peace, crisis management, diplomacy, and arms control. According to Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen (2009), international cooperation has played a major role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and promoting global stability. Paul D. Williams (2008; 2013) described global security as international collaborative efforts aimed at reducing threats such as terrorism, transnational crime, and arms trafficking. Other scholars emphasize that global security extends beyond military strength. John Baylis (2005) argued that economic and environmental factors are equally important in achieving security, while Noam

Chomsky (2003) maintained that the absence of cooperation among states increases the likelihood of global conflict. Stephen Walt (1991), from a realist perspective, defined global security as the protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political stability, whereas J. Ann Tickner (1992) emphasized human rights, cooperation, and international norms. Additionally, Michael Barnett (2001), Barry Buzan (1991), Daniel Drezner (2007), Mary Kaldor (2012), Alan Collins (2010), Elke Krahmann (2005), and Peter Hough (2008) all viewed global security as a multidimensional process involving military, political, economic, and diplomatic cooperation to prevent conflict and manage global threats.

Review of Related Literature

The Russia–Ukraine conflict has become one of the most consequential geopolitical crises in recent history, reshaping global security dynamics and challenging long-standing assumptions about international order. What began as a regional dispute has evolved into a broader confrontation with significant implications for diplomacy, global governance, economic stability, and ideological competition. The literature consistently emphasizes the conflict's multidimensional nature, highlighting its impact on institutions, power relations, and global interdependence. A major strand of scholarship focuses on the weakening effectiveness of international organizations, particularly the United Nations system. The inability of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to take decisive action against Russia, largely due to its veto power as a permanent member, has exposed structural limitations in global governance. This has raised concerns about the credibility and relevance of post-World War II institutions in maintaining international peace and security. Smith (2022) argues that this paralysis reflects a deeper legitimacy crisis within global governance structures, while Gartzke and Lupu (2023) highlight the gap between institutional expectations and the realities of great power politics. As a result, the war has intensified debates on whether current multilateral frameworks are still capable of effectively managing conflicts involving major powers.

Another key theme is the resurgence of great power rivalry, particularly between Russia and Western alliances led by the United States and NATO. The conflict has reinforced NATO's cohesion and strategic presence in Europe through expanded

military support for Ukraine, increased defense deployment in Eastern Europe, and the accession of new members such as Finland, with Sweden also pursuing membership. Mearsheimer (2014) and Tsygankov (2021) argue that NATO's post–Cold War expansion contributed to Russia's perception of encirclement and insecurity, which played a role in escalating tensions. Koenig (2023) further notes that NATO has increasingly framed itself as a defender of democratic values, deepening the ideological divide between liberal democracies and authoritarian states. This shift highlights how the conflict is not only geopolitical but also deeply ideological. The economic dimension of the war has also been widely examined. The disruption of global supply chains, energy markets, and food systems has demonstrated the interconnected vulnerabilities of the global economy. Europe's dependence on Russian oil and gas became a critical weakness following sanctions and supply disruptions. Pirani, Stern, and Yafimava (2010) had earlier warned about these risks, which materialized during the conflict through energy shortages, inflation, and economic instability across both developed and developing economies. Krasner (2023) similarly emphasizes that the war intensified global inflation and worsened food insecurity, particularly in countries reliant on grain exports from Ukraine and Russia. These disruptions reveal how regional conflicts can generate systemic global economic shocks.

In response, Europe has accelerated efforts to diversify its energy sources through investments in renewable energy, liquefied natural gas infrastructure, and alternative supply partnerships. These shifts are likely to reshape global energy governance and long-term geopolitical alignments, marking a structural transformation in international economic relations. The conflict has also challenged core assumptions of liberal internationalism. While liberal theory argues that democracy, economic interdependence, and international institutions promote peace (Russett, 1993), the war demonstrates that such mechanisms do not necessarily prevent military aggression. Despite Ukraine's deepening integration with Western institutions such as the EU and NATO, Russia still resorted to force to secure its strategic interests. Lough (2019) argues that this exposes the limitations of liberal assumptions about peace through integration, while Galeotti (2022) interprets the war as evidence of a return to realist power politics. Kofman (2022) further frames the conflict as both

ideological and territorial, positioning Ukraine as a symbol of democratic aspiration and Russia as a defender of authoritarian sovereignty. Overall, the literature suggests that the outcome of the war will significantly influence the future balance between liberal democratic values and authoritarian political systems in global politics.

The Effects of Russia -Ukraine War on World Peace and Security.

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has significantly transformed the global peace and security landscape by reshaping geopolitical relations, defense strategies, and international cooperation. The war has undermined established international norms relating to sovereignty and territorial integrity, exposing weaknesses within the post-Cold War global security system (Mearsheimer, 2022). In response to Russia's military actions, Western countries led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union imposed extensive sanctions on Russia and increased military and financial support for Ukraine, thereby intensifying tensions between major powers and reviving fears reminiscent of the Cold War era (Gros, 2022). The conflict has also generated new security dynamics as many countries increased military spending, strengthened defense systems, and modernized their armed forces. NATO reinforced its military presence in Eastern Europe, while traditionally neutral countries such as Finland and Sweden abandoned long-standing neutrality policies and pursued NATO membership due to growing concerns over Russian aggression (Stent, 2022; Smith, 2022). Beyond military issues, the war has worsened regional instability across Eastern Europe and Eurasia by increasing refugee movements, humanitarian crises, and tensions in nearby conflict zones such as the Caucasus and Transnistria (Goltz, 2021).

Economically, the war has severely disrupted global energy and food supply chains because Russia and Ukraine are major exporters of oil, natural gas, grains, and fertilizers. These disruptions contributed to rising global prices, inflation, food insecurity, and social unrest, especially in developing countries (von Braun et al., 2022). Europe's dependence on Russian energy also accelerated efforts toward renewable energy adoption and diversification of energy sources (Sovacool, 2022). Furthermore, the conflict has weakened international diplomacy and multilateral cooperation by damaging trust among major powers and limiting collective action on

issues such as climate change, nuclear arms control, and global health crises. The repeated use of Russia's veto power in the United Nations Security Council has further demonstrated the limitations of existing international institutions in resolving major global conflicts (Allison, 2022). Overall, the Russia-Ukraine war has become a defining challenge to global peace, security, economic stability, and international cooperation.

Ukraine War and Its Implications for Environmental and Energy Security in Europe and Surrounding Areas: A Comprehensive Overview

Russia and Ukraine's ongoing tensions, which were significantly heightened in the first months of 2022, are having a big impact on both environmental sustainability and energy safety in Europe and surrounding areas. The environment has been the first and most severely hit sector as circulated reports indicate that the war has significantly damaged the natural environment of Ukraine and its infrastructures. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) provided an initial estimation that the cost of the environmental damages related to the war exceeded $51 billion. These costs are mostly a consequence of the direct physical damage from warfare, extensive pollution of the soil and water and the ongoing ecological damage that jeopardizes the environmental integrity and biodiversity of the region in the long term (UNEP, 2023).

An example of a significant case of environmental destruction is the combustion of nearly 687,000 tons of petrochemical compounds resulting from shelling, together with the discharge of around 1,600 tons of poisonous substances into rivers, lakes, and reservoirs. This entire activity has been so harmful that it has caused a far-reaching contamination of the most valued freshwater supplies, making the situation worse by causing the quality of the water to decrease, not to mention that the same water at present poses a threat to the human population and aquatic ecosystems. In addition, roughly 70 acres of Ukraine's rich agricultural land have been heavily contaminated with harmful chemicals, putting the country's crop yield in danger and thus also the food security, not only locally but also for the larger region which is heavily relying on Ukrainian grain and produce (Environmental Protection Agency, 2023).

One of the biggest environmental disasters linked to the war was the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam in June 2023. The dam's collapse caused wide areas of usable farmland to be covered in water, but what was more severe, it caused the release of the industrial and chemical waste accumulated in the reservoir over decades. Among the pollutants released were polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and lindane, an extremely toxic pesticide, into the environment, which posed severe and long-lasting risks to aquatic life and human health as well. The destruction of the dam has been referred to as an "ecocide" by the Ukrainians in view of the enormity of the disaster and the resulting ecological devastation (UNEP, 2023). This disaster, together with long-term contamination from military actions and damage due to industry has raised environmental and public health problems that will have a long life not only in Ukraine but also in the neighboring countries whose ecosystems are interconnected with the region's.

In addition to the environmental issues, the matter showed a gaps in the energy sector of Europe. Close to the war time, the European Union was almost exclusively influenced by Russian resources, with Russia being the source of the EU's power to the extent of 45% for natural gas, 27% for oil, and 46% for coal. The whole matter was a problem due to the fact that the political tensions and mutual trade bans resulting in energy flows blocks and interruptions. This was acknowledged as a big problem so Europe decided to set itself free from Russia in terms of oil, gas, and finally coal. As a consequence of this, European Union that introduced the REPowerEU scheme doubled its efforts to accomplish the project. They established the new policy in the field of energy that would reduce the dependence on an unreliable vendor step by step- similar to the way how it was done when the vendor used to be the only one available. They even refused to renew gas supply contracts with some companies. Then, they also started to work on the tackling problem from the supply side by locating the gas underground. On the demand side, huge amount of.

In 2023, the EU had reduced its use of Russian natural gas by 45% to the extent of around 15% as a result of the diversification strategies which were in place then. There still exist problems with the isolation of Russia altogether in terms of energy,

on the other hand. For example, Slovakia is concerned over the likely severe economic effects of the EU's decision to stop Russian gas imports by 2027 and has raised it as a point that the very important and fragile balance between the region's energy security and economic stability is at stake (Kaufmann, 2024). It is amazing that the Russian LNG imports amounted to the highest level ever during the year 2024, thus shedding more light on the intricate and complex dynamics and international politics that create barriers for Europe to transit its energy away from Russia (Goldthau & Westphal, 2023).

Moreover, the conflict has brought the fragility of the energy network in the area to light, particularly because the Russians have focused their hands on the Ukrainian energy infrastruc- ture. In January 2025, a violent attack by the Ukrainian military on a gas compressor station in the Turk- Stream line, a critical artery for Russia's gas supplies to Turkey and south- ern Europe. Although the attack did not result in any gas transport disturbances, the event did indeed warn the world about the security of Europes energy net- works in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment (IEA, 2025). The situation of the war besides the need for a rapid energy source shift still dominate the discussion on the need of com- prehensive energy security strategies that will make energy networks safe by providing security and protection networks for both physical and digital disruptions, and also the diversification and decarbonization measures.

Furthermore, during the course of the war, water infrastructure was not spared from being totally destroyed. Before the middle of 2023, it was disclosed in Ukrainian government reports that more than 700 hydraulic buildings were destroyed, among them 71 water pumping stations, and 64 sewage pumping stations which are crucial in providing clean water and maintaining sanitation (Ukrainian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, 2023). The destruction of the hydraulic constructions resulted in the discharge of roughly 20.7 billion cubic meters of sewage into the surface water, making it all the more difficult to control the environment and public health crises. The pollution gives rise to the situation where safe drinking water becomes scarce in the whole country, and there are additional risks of waterborne diseases. This is causing immediate health problems within

Ukraine and even in surrounding countries that are located upstream or downstream of the shared water system (World Bank, 2024).

It is easy to see that the destruction and recovery work that will come as a result of the war between Russia and Ukraine is going to be on a large scale. The REPowerEU plan steps in as one of the primary attempts to lower down the European dependence on the Russian oil and gas sector. Yet, it also shows the complicated negotiations and economic discrepancies of such a huge paradigm shift. Consequently, the war has brought out the paramount importance of very strict regulations that not only safeguard the environment but the energy sectors as well in order to provide the region with stability. Moving forward, synchronized global aid together with early and targeted funding in enduring, green, and diversified energy structures, along with landscape reforestation, will definitely be the key to building a self-reliant Ukraine, Europe and bordering areas.

The Responses of International Institutions and Global Powers in Addressing the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The international response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict has involved a combination of economic sanctions, military assistance, diplomatic engagement, and humanitarian interventions aimed at defending Ukraine's sovereignty and restoring regional stability. However, these responses have also exposed major challenges confronting international institutions and global powers in resolving modern geopolitical conflicts. One of the major responses adopted by Western countries, particularly the United States, the European Union, and their allies, was the imposition of extensive economic sanctions against Russia. These sanctions targeted key sectors of the Russian economy, including energy, finance, defense, and influential political and business elites, with the aim of weakening Russia's economic capacity to sustain the war and pressuring its leadership to reconsider its military objectives. Although the sanctions significantly affected the Russian economy through reduced foreign investment, restricted financial access, and economic decline, they failed to produce the expected political outcome. Instead, the Russian government used nationalist rhetoric to portray the sanctions as foreign interference and an attack on Russian sovereignty, thereby strengthening domestic support for the Kremlin rather than

weakening it (Cornell, 2020). This demonstrates one of the major challenges of sanctions as a foreign policy tool, namely that economic pressure does not always lead to political compromise, especially in highly centralized political systems.

Military assistance has also formed a central part of the global response. Countries within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), especially the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland, and several European states, supplied Ukraine with weapons, intelligence support, military training, and advanced defense systems such as Javelin missiles, HIMARS rocket systems, drones, and air defense equipment (Miller, 2022). These measures strengthened Ukraine's defensive capabilities and enabled it to resist Russian advances more effectively. However, military support also created additional tensions by reinforcing Russia's claim that the West was directly involved in the conflict. The continued supply of weapons prolonged the war and increased fears of escalation between Russia and NATO members. Despite extensive military support, Russia maintained control over parts of eastern and southern Ukraine, highlighting the limitation of military aid as a conflict-resolution strategy (Wilson, 2023). The challenge therefore lies in balancing military assistance with diplomatic efforts capable of producing sustainable peace.

Diplomatic and humanitarian efforts were mainly coordinated through international institutions such as the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). These organizations facilitated peace talks, humanitarian relief operations, conflict monitoring, and ceasefire negotiations. The United Nations condemned the invasion through resolutions and provided humanitarian assistance to civilians affected by the war, while the OSCE monitored ceasefire violations and reported on human rights abuses in conflict zones (Smith, 2021). Nevertheless, diplomatic efforts achieved limited success because of deep-rooted historical grievances, ethnic tensions, territorial disputes, and geopolitical rivalries surrounding the conflict. A major institutional challenge was the inability of the UN Security Council to take decisive action due to Russia's veto power as a permanent member, which weakened the effectiveness and credibility of global governance mechanisms.

Another major challenge confronting international actors has been the absence of a unified global strategy. While Western countries largely supported Ukraine through sanctions and military aid, several countries adopted neutral or cautious positions due to economic ties with Russia, energy dependence, or broader geopolitical interests (Cornell, 2020). Rivalries among major powers such as the United States, Russia, and China further complicated collective international action and weakened multilateral cooperation (Tsygankov, 2021). Additionally, earlier diplomatic initiatives such as the Minsk Agreements failed because of persistent mistrust, repeated violations, and the inability to address the underlying causes of the conflict, including historical hostility, nationalism, and competing security interests (Mearsheimer, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Realism theory of international relations, which provides a structured explanation of state behaviour in an anarchic global system. Realism, largely developed by Hans J. Morgenthau in *Politics among Nations* (1948), builds on earlier classical thinkers such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, all of whom emphasized power, survival, and self-interest as central drivers of political action. Later scholars like Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (2014) further refined the theory by highlighting the structural nature of international politics, where the absence of a central authority forces states to rely on self-help mechanisms to ensure survival. At its core, Realism assumes that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no global government to enforce rules or guarantee security. As a result, states are the primary actors and behave rationally to protect their national interest, which is often defined in terms of power and security. Military capability remains the most reliable form of power, and survival is the most fundamental goal. This condition creates constant competition among states, leading to balancing behaviour, alliances, and periodic conflict. International law and institutions are viewed as secondary because they lack enforcement power when they conflict with the interests of strong states.

Applied to the Russia–Ukraine conflict, Realism offers a direct explanation of both the causes and continuation of the war. Russia's actions, including the annexation of

Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale invasion in 2022, can be interpreted as strategic efforts to protect its sphere of influence, prevent NATO expansion, and maintain regional dominance. From a realist perspective, Ukraine's growing alignment with Western institutions such as NATO and the European Union represents a strategic threat to Russia's security buffer, altering the regional balance of power and triggering a defensive, power-driven response. Realism also helps explain the limited effectiveness of international agreements such as the Budapest Memorandum. Although it guaranteed Ukraine's territorial integrity, the agreement lacked enforcement mechanisms capable of constraining a powerful state when core security interests are perceived to be at stake. This reflects the realist argument that international norms and legal frameworks are only effective when they align with state interests; otherwise, power prevails over obligation. The responses of external actors further reinforce realist logic. NATO's expansion efforts, increased military presence in Eastern Europe, and Western military and financial support to Ukraine are not purely moral actions but strategic measures aimed at maintaining the balance of power, deterring Russian expansion, and preserving regional influence. Similarly, Russia's approach to negotiations and the West's continued military support both reflect calculated strategies to improve bargaining positions rather than purely normative commitments to peace.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive and documentary research design to examine the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its implications for global peace and security. The descriptive design enabled the study to explain the nature of the conflict and analyze its geopolitical, economic, military, and diplomatic impacts, while the documentary approach involved the critical examination of existing materials such as historical records, government publications, academic journals, policy papers, media reports, and institutional documents. The study relied mainly on secondary sources of data, including peer-reviewed articles, books, reports from international organizations such as the United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, government documents, policy statements, newspapers, documentaries, and interviews. Media sources such as the BBC, The New York Times, The Guardian, *and* Al Jazeera were

also consulted to provide current information and expert perspectives on the conflict. Data were analyzed using content analysis, comparative analysis, and thematic analysis. Content analysis was used to identify recurring themes and viewpoints within the collected materials, while comparative analysis examined the responses and strategies of key actors such as Russia, Ukraine, NATO, and international organizations. Thematic analysis further categorized major issues such as great power rivalry, energy geopolitics, NATO's role, and economic sanctions to evaluate their implications for global peace and security. In addition, focus group discussions involving international relations experts, security analysts, and policy stakeholders provided broader human, political, and social perspectives on the conflict.

DATA ANALYSES

Evaluation of Research Question one: How has the Russia-Ukraine war affected national and sub-national policy dynamics in developing and non-Western regions?

The Russia–Ukraine war, which began in February 2022, has significantly reshaped the global order, with far-reaching consequences for both developed and developing countries. Beyond the immediate humanitarian crisis, the conflict disrupted global food, fertilizer, and energy markets, creating widespread economic instability across national and subnational levels (Aspasia & Bobby, 2022; Kane, Bessie, & Thelma, 2022). At the national level, food security quickly became a major concern, especially in regions such as Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia that depend heavily on grain imports from Black Sea countries. Governments responded by diversifying food procurement sources, releasing strategic reserves, and expanding subsidies. For instance, Egypt, a major importer of wheat from both Russia and Ukraine, adopted emergency measures by sourcing alternative imports from Europe and Asia while maintaining its politically sensitive bread subsidy program to preserve social stability (MERIP, 2022). Similarly, African governments adjusted procurement and subsidy systems to manage rising fertilizer prices and prevent food shortages, reflecting a broader shift toward resilience and supply-chain diversification (International Food Policy Research Institute [IFPRI], 2023).

The conflict also triggered major adjustments in energy policy. Several countries turned to alternative sourcing strategies to manage rising fuel prices. India, for

example, increased imports of discounted Russian oil to stabilize domestic inflation and ensure energy security, a move that also had implications for its foreign policy relations with Western countries (Laruelle & Mukherjee, 2023; Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS], 2024). Other countries responded by reducing fuel subsidies and expanding social protection programs, even though such measures delayed energy pricing reforms and climate commitments, they were considered necessary to maintain political and economic stability during volatility (International Energy Agency, 2023). Macroeconomic stability also deteriorated in many developing countries. Rising import bills, currency depreciation, and fiscal deficits forced several governments to seek external financial assistance. Ghana, for instance, entered an IMF-supported program in 2023 following the combined shocks of COVID-19 and the Ukraine war, which required fiscal consolidation, debt restructuring, and targeted social protection measures (IMF, 2023). Similarly, Pakistan faced stringent IMF conditions as it struggled with inflation and external debt pressures, demonstrating how the war exacerbated existing structural weaknesses and increased reliance on external borrowing (Kugelman, 2023).

Although national governments designed most policy responses, subnational governments bore the direct burden of implementation. Regional and local authorities were responsible for executing food distribution, social protection programs, and budget adjustments amid rising prices. In Nigeria, state governments had to revise budgets and introduce emergency relief programs in response to sudden food and fuel price increases, as earlier fiscal plans became obsolete (Overseas Development Institute [ODI], 2022). In Ghana and Kenya, local governments supported school feeding programs and cash transfer initiatives, although gaps between central policy design and fiscal transfers often created implementation bottlenecks, exposing weaknesses in decentralized governance systems (ODI, 2022). Countries also adopted highly varied policy responses depending on domestic priorities. Indonesia introduced a temporary ban on palm oil exports in April 2022 to stabilize domestic cooking oil prices, prioritizing internal welfare over international trade commitments (Reuters, 2022). Egypt reinforced its bread subsidy system to prevent social unrest, while India's deepening energy trade with Russia demonstrated how geopolitical neutrality can be leveraged for economic advantage (CSIS, 2024).

These cases illustrate how national policies were reshaped pragmatically based on domestic pressures, fiscal capacity, and global opportunities.

i. Impact on Policy Shifts in Developing and Non-Western Regions

a. Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Strategy

Developing and non-Western countries have generally adopted neutral or non-aligned foreign policy positions in response to the Russia–Ukraine war. Many states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have avoided taking sides, instead prioritizing strategic autonomy, sovereignty, and balanced relations with both Western powers and Russia (Floyd, 2015; Bajpai, 2022). Countries such as India, South Africa, Kenya, and Brazil illustrate this approach by maintaining diplomatic and economic engagement with both blocs while avoiding direct involvement in sanctions or military alignment (Chin, 2022; Adebajo, 2022; Lee, 2022; Figueiredo & Almeida, 2022). A key feature of this strategy is diplomatic diversification, where countries strengthen ties with alternative partners such as China, India, and Russia to reduce vulnerability to Western-led sanctions and global supply chain disruptions (Rana, 2023; Alves, 2022). This reflects a broader shift toward multipolar diplomacy, where states seek flexibility rather than fixed alliances. Overall, the war has accelerated the move toward non-alignment and strategic autonomy as countries adjust their foreign policies to protect national interests in a fragmented global order (Singh, 2022; Malamud, 2021).

b. Domestic Policy Adaptations

Domestic policy responses across developing regions have increasingly focused on strengthening national resilience in response to the economic shocks of the Russia–Ukraine war. Governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have prioritized food security, energy independence, and fiscal stability due to rising global prices and disrupted supply chains (UNCTAD, 2022). Food security has been a central concern, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where dependence on imported grain and fertilizer exposed economies to immediate risks. Countries such as Nigeria and Ethiopia responded by supporting local agriculture through subsidies and investment in food production systems (Draper & O'Neill, 2022; African Development Bank, 2023).

Energy policy has also shifted, with countries like India and Brazil investing more in renewable energy and alternative sources to reduce dependence on volatile global oil markets (Ramesh & Sood, 2023; Castro & Fernandes, 2022). At the same time, fiscal pressures from inflation and subsidy costs have pushed governments toward austerity measures, debt restructuring, and targeted social spending, as seen in countries like Argentina and several Southeast Asian economies (López & Fernández, 2023; Southeast Asia Economic Forum, 2023). Overall, domestic policies increasingly reflect a shift toward self-reliance, economic diversification, and long-term resilience planning (World Bank, 2023).

c. Economic Policy Adjustments

Economic policy responses in developing and non-Western countries have been shaped by inflation, supply chain disruptions, and rising commodity prices triggered by the war. Governments have adjusted national economic frameworks to prioritize food security and energy resilience as core policy goals (Dube, 2023). In agriculture, countries such as Nigeria and Kenya introduced subsidies and local production support programs to reduce dependence on imports and stabilize food prices (African Union, 2023). In the energy sector, countries like India and Brazil accelerated renewable energy investments and diversified domestic energy sources to reduce exposure to global oil and gas volatility (Mishra & Desai, 2023). These changes reflect both short-term stabilization measures such as subsidies and price controls, and long-term structural reforms aimed at building self-sustaining economies. Investments in agricultural technology, infrastructure, and regional trade partnerships further support these goals (Economic Commission for Africa, 2023).

Impact of Hybrid Warfare on Policy and Governance

The Russia–Ukraine war has reshaped foreign policy and diplomatic strategies in developing and non-Western countries, pushing many toward non-alignment and strategic autonomy (Floyd, 2015; Bajpai, 2022; Chin, 2022). Across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, states have generally avoided taking sides, instead maintaining balanced relations with both Russia and Western powers to protect national interests. This is reflected in countries such as India, South Africa, and Brazil, which have

adopted neutrality or cautious engagement while preserving diplomatic flexibility in a multipolar world (Adebajo, 2022; Lee, 2022; Figueiredo & Almeida, 2022). A key outcome has been diplomatic diversification, where countries expand partnerships with emerging powers like China and Russia and strengthen participation in BRICS and the Non-Aligned Movement (Rana, 2023; Alves, 2022; Malamud, 2021; Singh, 2022).

Domestically, developing countries have focused on strengthening resilience in food, energy, and fiscal systems in response to the disruptions caused by the war (UNCTAD, 2022). Food security became a major priority, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where countries such as Nigeria and Ethiopia expanded agricultural subsidies and local production to reduce import dependence (Draper & O'Neill, 2022; African Development Bank, 2023). Energy policy also shifted, with countries like India and Brazil investing in renewable energy and diversifying energy sources to reduce exposure to global market volatility (Ramesh & Sood, 2023; Castro & Fernandes, 2022). At the same time, fiscal pressures led to austerity measures, debt restructuring, and expanded social spending in several countries, reflecting efforts to balance economic stability with rising living costs (López & Fernández, 2023). Overall, these changes reflect a long-term shift toward self-reliance and resilience (World Bank, 2023).

Economic policy adjustments have intensified due to inflation, supply chain disruptions, and rising commodity prices triggered by the war (Dube, 2023). Governments have prioritized food and energy security, introducing subsidies and agricultural support programs to stabilize domestic systems (African Union, 2023). Countries such as India and Brazil have diversified their energy bases through renewable investments to reduce dependence on global markets (Mishra & Desai, 2023). These short-term and long-term interventions aim to strengthen economic resilience through subsidies, price controls, and infrastructure investment (Economic Commission for Africa, 2023; UNCTAD, 2023; African Development Bank, 2023). The Russia–Ukraine war has also intensified global cyber threats, prompting stronger cybersecurity and digital governance policies across developing and non-Western countries. Critical sectors such as finance and energy have experienced increased

cyberattacks in countries like India and South Africa (India Cybersecurity Review, 2023; South African Government, 2023). In response, governments have strengthened national cybersecurity frameworks, including India's National Cyber Security Strategy (2023) and South Africa's cybersecurity legislation (South African Cybersecurity Act, 2022). Similar efforts in countries such as Singapore and Japan integrate cybersecurity into national defense strategies (Singapore Ministry of Defence, 2022; Japan Ministry of Defense, 2023). Regional cooperation has also expanded, particularly through the African Union's cybersecurity strategy (African Union Cybersecurity Strategy, 2023). Overall, cybersecurity is now recognized as a core component of national security and economic stability (UNCTAD, 2023).

The war has further intensified media manipulation and disinformation, weakening trust in institutions across developing countries. False narratives circulating on social media have contributed to political tension and public confusion in countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, and the Philippines (Ogunleye & Ayodele, 2023; Philippine National Security Report, 2023). Governments have responded with digital literacy programs and regulatory frameworks, including Nigeria's National Digital Literacy Framework and Kenya's strengthened social media regulation policies (Kenya Communications Authority, 2023). Brazil and Mexico have introduced measures targeting fake news and platform accountability (Brazilian Ministry of Justice, 2023; Mexico Digital Governance Report, 2023). Despite these efforts, disinformation remains a major governance challenge. Closely linked to this is declining public trust in government communication, especially in countries with fragile media systems. Citizens increasingly rely on social media or foreign sources, often leading to conflicting narratives and confusion (Ogunleye & Ayodele, 2023; Figueiredo & Almeida, 2023). In countries such as Ethiopia, Venezuela, and India, media polarization has deepened political divisions and reduced trust in official communication (Vargas & Tovar, 2023; India Ministry of Information, 2023). This has increased the need for media literacy and independent journalism, although government regulation efforts often raise concerns about freedom of expression.

Multilateral institutions such as NATO and the EU have shaped global responses to the war, but their actions have also created tensions with developing countries that

prefer neutrality. NATO's military expansion and EU sanctions are often viewed in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as reflecting Western interests rather than global consensus (European Commission, 2023). Countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Brazil, and India have maintained neutral positions while emphasizing diplomacy and economic concerns (South African Government, 2023; Figueiredo & Almeida, 2023; India Ministry of External Affairs, 2023). This has encouraged greater participation in BRICS, ASEAN, and the Non-Aligned Movement, reflecting a broader shift toward multipolar diplomacy (Malamud, 2021). Economic sanctions on Russia have produced wide global ripple effects, especially in developing economies already vulnerable to shocks. Disruptions in food, energy, and fertilizer supply chains led to inflation and economic pressure across Africa, Asia, and Latin America (African Development Bank, 2023). Countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, India, Argentina, and Brazil responded with subsidies, price controls, and trade diversification strategies (India Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, 2023; Figueiredo & Almeida, 2023). In response, many developing countries strengthened trade ties with non-Western partners, including China, Russia, and BRICS members, to stabilize supply chains and reduce dependency on Western systems (African Union Economic Report, 2023; Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Evaluation of Research objective two: What are the psychological, technological, and sociopolitical impacts of hybrid warfare on both military and civilian populations in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war?

Modern warfare has changed significantly since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. A new term has been coined for such warfare and it is called, "hybrid warfare". The Russian-Ukraine war is a perfect example of this. It is mainly the use of cyberattacks, military raids, economic sanctions, and disinformation to inflict harm on both the military and the public. The psychological effects that accompany hybrid warfare are predominantly negative. The incessant threats and misinformation from the war zones often lead to the development of stress, anxiety, and PTSD in both the military and the civilian population. Moreover, the continual communication disruption amidst the war zones is one of the major technological effects that are experienced. The communication lines between the common people on the streets to

the government are destroyed. Economically, hybrid warfare cripples the economy of the country. A more connected military force and more secured civilian population are the main targets of terrorists in such a situation. All these issues are part and parcel of the current and future modern conflicts. They should be the focus of the defense, resilience, and governance strategies so as to the ability in the next conflict. That, hence, will be the main focus to:

Psychological Impacts of Hybrid Warfare in the Russia–Ukraine Conflict

Hybrid warfare, which combines cyber attacks, disinformation, and conventional military force, has caused severe psychological harm in Ukraine, especially among civilians exposed to overlapping physical and digital threats. Continuous exposure to violence, cyber breaches, and misinformation has contributed to rising cases of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Research shows that civilians in hybrid conflict zones are often more psychologically affected than frontline soldiers due to the blurred boundaries between war and civilian spaces and the absence of adequate protection (Roberts et al., 2022). This condition has been described as "hybrid war syndrome," where digital manipulation and social instability produce widespread collective trauma (Petkova & Dimitrov, 2021). Among military personnel, hybrid warfare has also created significant psychological strain. Soldiers are required to operate in environments shaped by drones, cyber threats, irregular combat, and disinformation, which increases uncertainty and moral confusion. Studies show that the lack of clear rules of engagement in such conflicts contributes to moral injury, as soldiers are frequently forced into ethically difficult decisions with long-term psychological consequences (Shvets, Kalnysh, & Trinka, 2021). New stress-related conditions have also emerged, including "droneophobia," where constant surveillance and sudden aerial attacks trigger extreme anxiety and mental breakdowns, highlighting limitations in traditional PTSD treatment approaches (Smith, 2023). Hybrid warfare also extends into the information space, where media and cyber platforms are used as tools of psychological warfare. Disinformation campaigns, fake content, and bot-driven propaganda weaken trust, create confusion, and reduce public resilience (Kuzio, 2022). The psychological impact is not limited to those in active conflict zones but also affects distant

populations exposed to continuous information warfare. Overall, such campaigns produce sustained fear, uncertainty, and cognitive disruption, reinforcing the need for long-term mental health support in hybrid conflict environments (Roberts et al., 2022).

Technological Innovations in Hybrid Warfare: The Russia–Ukraine Conflict

Hybrid warfare has been a defining feature of the Russia–Ukraine war, introducing new technological dimensions to modern conflict. Both sides have relied heavily on drones, cyber tools, and electronic warfare systems to achieve tactical and strategic advantages. A notable example is Ukraine's innovative use of low-cost commercial technologies, particularly FPV drones, which have been modified for surveillance, precision strikes, and disrupting enemy supply chains. This reflects what Kallenborn (2022) describes as the "democratization of military technology," where inexpensive consumer tools can be transformed into effective weapons systems (Stewart, 2022). On the other hand, Russia's cyber operations have targeted Ukraine's critical infrastructure, including satellite communications, GPS systems, energy networks, and public services, thereby disrupting both military coordination and civilian life (Maurer, 2023). These cyberattacks highlight the broader strategy of integrating information warfare with digital disruption, reinforcing the view that Russia's hybrid approach deliberately combines cyber and informational tools to weaken both military capacity and societal stability (Giles, 2022).\

The combination of drones, electronic warfare, and cyber capabilities illustrates a clear shift toward multidimensional warfare, where control over information systems is as important as physical territory. According to Deeks (2021), this represents a transition from traditional battlefield engagements to complex hybrid environments in which data networks and technological infrastructure are central to military effectiveness.

Sociopolitical Dimensions of Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine

Hybrid warfare has been a defining factor in the Russia–Ukraine war, reshaping modern combat through the integration of advanced technologies and innovative battlefield tactics. Both Russia and Ukraine have relied on drones, cyber tools, and

electronic warfare systems to gain tactical and strategic advantages. In particular, Ukraine has demonstrated notable adaptability by combining low-cost commercial technologies with military needs, especially through the use of modified FPV racing drones for surveillance, precision strikes, and disruption of enemy logistics. This development reflects Kallenborn's (2022) concept of the "democratization of military technology," where affordable consumer technologies can be transformed into effective weapons systems (Stewart, 2022). At the same time, Russian cyber operations have targeted Ukraine's critical infrastructure, including satellite communications, GPS systems, energy networks, and civilian services, thereby disrupting both military coordination and everyday life (Maurer, 2023). These attacks highlight the growing threat of cyber warfare in highly digitalized societies and demonstrate how Russia's hybrid strategy integrates information operations with cyberattacks to weaken both military and civilian systems (Giles, 2022).

The combination of drones, electronic warfare, and cyber capabilities illustrates a shift toward multidimensional warfare, where digital infrastructure and communication systems are as critical as physical territory. According to Deeks (2021), this marks a transition from traditional battlefield engagements to hybrid conflict environments driven by technological interdependence. Overall, the war underscores the need for states to invest not only in advanced offensive capabilities but also in resilient technological infrastructures capable of withstanding diverse hybrid threats, as future conflicts will increasingly depend on adaptability and innovation.

Conclusion

The Russia–Ukraine war brought about a very large change in the political, economic, and security situations of the developing and non-Western regions. During the conflict, several governments have been forced to implement policies to deal with the situation and, at the same time, they were able to maintain their pragmatic foreign policy by being neutral and at the same time not creating obstacles for their trade and diplomatic ties. The war has clearly shown the weak points of populations that both belong to the military and to civilians and are targets to hybrid warfare. These factors show the need for and validity of the responses that comprise the protection of cyber

security, support of mental health, reform of governance, and community involvement. Moreover, Western media and international institutions stand out with their strong presence as they have had a huge say in many situations and, thus, they have presented new possibilities and limitations in foreign and strategic decision-making. At the end of the day, the whole process is associated with the following discoveries: in order for today's multipolar world to manage with crises, there should be a system of governing that is able to adjust, resilient strategies across many areas, and advanced sagacity. For this, the actions of both national and international parties must be concerted to the extent where there are on the same page for making the stability and sustainable development of the country a long-term matter.

Recommendations

i. States should prioritize continuous investment in advanced military technologies, including drones, electronic warfare systems, and other emerging defense innovations, to enhance operational effectiveness in modern hybrid conflict environments.

ii. Governments should strengthen national cyber resilience by developing robust cybersecurity frameworks that protect critical infrastructure such as communication networks, energy systems, and financial platforms from cyber threats and digital disruptions.

iii. Military and security institutions should enhance training and capacity-building programs that promote technological adaptability and innovation, ensuring personnel are equipped to respond effectively to the evolving nature of hybrid warfare threats.

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