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Exploring Conflict Escalation: Power Imbalance, Alliances, Diplomacy, Media, and Big Data in a Multipolar World

Arshed Simo [1], Shamal Mustafa [1] and Kawar Mohammed Mousa [2,*]

[1] Department of Political Science and International Relations, Near East University, North Cyprus, via Mersin 10, Nicosia 99138, Turkey; arshad.simo@neu.edu.tr (A.S.); shamal.mustafa@neu.edu.tr (S.M.)
[2] Department of Business Administration, Near East University, North Cyprus, via Mersin 10, Nicosia 99138, Turkey
* Correspondence: kawarmohammed.mousa@neu.edu.tr

Abstract: The analysis in this study covers how power imbalance, alliance cohesion, diplomatic and media framing, and big data analytics affect scaling up in the conflict in a multipolar world. This research applies the Constructivist International Relations Theory to examine survey data of 250 international relations experts, policymakers, and analysts using Survey Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) via SMART-PLS. Power imbalance and the way the media frames the situation are found to lead to an escalation of conflicts, but strong alliance cohesion, diplomatic effort, and big data analytics can mitigate the risk of the escalation. Strategic diplomacy, media regulation, and real-time data monitoring have thus shown their capacity to prevent conflict. These contribute to conflict studies by incorporating political IR models, data science knowledge, and policy advice on global security governance. This means they can support the prediction and prevention of conflicts by means of diplomatic transparency, ethical media practice, and AI early warning systems. This study is limited by the use of self-reported data; however, the results of this study indicate that this topic is under-explored in cultural and geopolitical terms. The results help inform policymakers and security entities on ways to address conflict resolution as a matter of discretion and from a multidimensional perspective. Survey Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) via SMART-PLS is a technique used for analyzing structural relationships between measured variables and latent constructs, providing valuable insights into complex models. Survey Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) via SMART-PLS is a technique used for analyzing structural relationships between measured variables and latent constructs, providing valuable insights into complex models.

Keywords: diplomatic efforts; political science; conflict escalation; media framing; power imbalance

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1. Introduction

Past and present international conflicts confirm the compound dependence of countries and blocs on each other and global security (Schweitzer, 2021; Väyrynen, 2023). Research so far has discovered that power imbalances contribute to tension rise, at times resulting in violent confrontations when militancy routes are taken to oppose strong powers (Exner-Cortens et al., 2023; Siangulube et al., 2023; Udawalpola et al., 2021). Nonetheless, alliance cohesion equally matters, as strong alliances militate against conflicts, while fragmenting does the opposite (McGlynn & Đureinović, 2023). Besides military and strategic alliances, the resolution of conflict has always depended on diplomacy. Good diplomatic engagement could hamper tensions by promoting the ability to communicate and negotiate

the settlement (Denzenlkham, 2021; Zhang, 2022). Geopolitics today plays a key role in media framing, as it molds public opinion and influences policymaking. The main media (and, increasingly, digital media) tends to sensationalize or distort conflicts, exacerbating their hostilities, whereas responsible reporting could help mitigate the public's opinion in terms of negative sentiments and reduce tensions (Betus et al., 2020; Sievert et al., 2022).

Big data analytics has become a strong processing tool for the prevention and monitoring of conflict due to the advancement in technology. Data-driven intelligence, through an initial warning system, can analyze real-time social media sentiment and geopolitical trends to determine the increase in tension (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020). Unfortunately, the incorporation of big data analytics in a conflict resolution context is a relatively untouched issue in existing research.

Although previous studies have significantly advanced our understanding of conflict dynamics (Konrad & Levine, 2021; Väyrynen, 2023), this study stands out in several important respects. To quantitatively assess the interaction of independent variables in predicting conflict escalation tendencies, this study uses structural equation modeling (SEM) via SMART-PLS. This research includes many variables in a comprehensive model, in contrast to earlier research that focused only on one or two variables.

Conceptually, this study is built on an interdisciplinary framework that blends media studies, data analytics, and theories of international relations. The strengths of each field are used in this study to give a thorough knowledge of the conflict escalation process, in contrast to previous studies that relied only on a single theoretical lens. Previous research approaches restricted the generalizability of their findings by concentrating exclusively on certain geographical areas or conflict kinds (Féron, 2020; Väyrynen, 2023). On the other hand, this study has a global viewpoint and covers a wide range of conflicts from varied geographical areas and power dynamics.

According to this study's first findings, factors such as power imbalances, alliance cohesion, diplomatic attempts, media framing, and big data analytics all contribute to the likelihood that a conflict will escalate. Power imbalances and media framing, in particular, became crucial factors in the escalation. The implications of these findings for policymakers are extensive. Recognizing and addressing power disparities, as well as using the right media coverage strategies, could potentially prevent conflict from escalating. By providing a full model that explains the complex relationships between variables that affect conflict escalation, this work advances our understanding of the subject.

Problem Statement

Relevant studies to the task at hand focused on individual factors like the effect of power asymmetry, alliance structures, diplomacy, media narratives, and technology, and not the ways by which these factors interacted. By fragmenting such analysis, one is unable to grasp how these variables, in fact, work in tandem in a multipolar world defined by ever more complex and unpredictable conflicts. Additionally, mere binary classifications or qualitative analysis characterizing the escalation dynamics is not sufficient in most cases for the traditional techniques. In this manner, out of the need to provide related, data-driven, and interdisciplinary research, there is a demand for research that examines the combined effect of power imbalance, alliance cohesion, diplomatic intensity, media framing, big data analytics, etc., on conflict escalation in the face of an emerging world where the frequency of wars in changing rapidly. To cover this gap, this study employs a quantitative framework that combines insights from International Relations and Communication Studies as well as computational analytics to discuss the dynamics of a conflict.

The objective of this study is to explore the intricate relationship among the different circumstances that lead to conflict escalation in the conditions of a multipolar world. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. To study the impact of power imbalances, alliance cohesion, and diplomacy in combination and evaluate the impact of those three together on increasing, respectively, reducing the chances of global conflicts becoming violent.
2. To assess the effect that media framing and big data analytics have in determining conflict narratives, public perception, and early warning signs for conflict prevention.

Through the accomplishment of these objectives, this research fills the gap between conventional international relations thinking and current high-technology developments by recommending knowledge-based solutions to policymakers, security organizations, and conflict resolution professionals.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Power imbalances, alliance cohesion, diplomacy, media framing, and big data analytics are all discussed in Section 2, along with the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual framework of conflict escalation. The method is explained in Section 3, along with the survey design, data collection, and usage of SEM via SMART-PLS. The empirical analysis of the results is presented in Section 4, which is followed by a discussion of the policy implications. Section 5 concludes by summarizing key findings and arguing potential directions of future research to understand and control tendencies to escalate conflict.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conflict Escalation Tendencies

Conflict Escalation Tendencies is a crucial field in conflict studies for studying the evolution and the strength of global conflicts. This variable measures the danger of transformation of a small-scale conflict into a more severe crisis with staggering effects (Andersen et al., 2022; Boroș, 2020). In order to understand global conflict management and resolution strategies, it is necessary to accurately assess and predict conflict escalation tendencies (Scheppa-Lahyani & Zapf, 2023; Yakter & Tessler, 2022).

Prior studies have focused on how important it is to understand conflict escalation tendencies because of their wide-ranging effects. Galtung's seminal work of 1965, the notion of the "escalation ladder," demonstrated how disagreements rise through ranks of escalation, almost always escalating in hostility and, in worst cases, to violent confrontations (Cunningham, 2023; Ivie, 2022).

2.2. Relationship Between Independent Variables and Dependent Variables

Conflict escalation tendencies are related to independent factors, power imbalance, alliance cohesion, diplomatic intensity, media framing, and big data analytics in a complex and diverged manner. Current research explains these links.

The complex context of conflict escalation involves a number of crucial variables. The power imbalance is one such element, which (Exner-Cortens et al., 2023; Siangulube et al., 2023; Martins, 2020) empirically studied. If the weaker party feels that it has less power, it may take drastic measures to make up for that imbalance of power, so the research indicates that they are more likely to escalate when there is an imbalance of power between the parties. It further emphasizes (Exner-Cortens et al., 2023; Ivie, 2022) the importance of alliance coherence in the fact that powerful and coherent coalitions can be powerful stabilizing forces that maintain diplomatic solutions (Denzenlkham, 2021; Zhang, 2022). argues that increased diplomatic efforts are a measure of deterrence to conflict escalation since it provides open and communicative channels to de-escalate and resolve conflicts in peace. In 1980 debates, Gitlin also stressed the importance of media framing. The issue

may become worse by sensationalized or biased representations of conflicts, which hurts public morale (Ninan et al., 2022; Sievert et al., 2022). (Abkenar et al., 2021) finally asserted the very essence of big data analytics on current conflict sciences, especially that the use of real-time social media sentiment monitoring can serve as a concave of escalating tensions (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020).

In the digital age, big data analytics has created new possibilities for researching and even managing disputes. Researchers like (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020). How sentiment analysis on social media platforms may offer in-the-moment insights into the general mood and opinions around conflicts. This is crucial for prompt action since it enables the early observation of rising tensions before they explode. Big data can also be used to research a variety of topics, from army movements to economic indicators, providing a more comprehensive understanding of conflict situations (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020). For instance, machine learning algorithms can be used as an additional layer of predictive intelligence, going through massive databases to seed an anticipating war by locating preposterous patterns or currents. Thus, big data analytics can be used as a conflict avoidance and resolution preventative mechanism, as well as as an observational instrument.

The researcher lacks the literature on the integration of power imbalance, alliance cohesion, diplomatic efforts, and framing of media with big data analytics and the interaction of all of these factors and their impact on conflict escalation tendencies in the multipolar environment (Walther et al., 2023; Yakter & Tessler, 2022; Hu et al., 2021). Many of these, in some way, have been researched individually; however, very little has been conducted as a whole, considering them interdependent and explaining the whole process of conflict escalation.

Currently, the available literature is most concerned with studying individual components that make up conflict escalation views and overlooking the complex interactions between them. The presence of this gap implies the importance of an exhaustive study on the connections among power disparity, the coherence of alliance, diplomatic attempts, media framing, and big data analytics as variables that contribute to warring escalation tendencies. Therefore, the problem at hand can be described as follows:

Present studies do not know how power imbalances, alliance cohesion, diplomat's efforts, media framing, and big data analytics would play a role in the interplay of power imbalances, alliance cohesion, diplomatic efforts, media framing, and big data analytics to predict conflict escalation tendencies in a multipolar world.

3. Theoretical Framework

By representing the project against Constructivist International Relations Theory, this study argues specifically that conflict escalation trends are not only bent on by inherent disparity of abilities but by the views, linkages, and correspondence among entrusting celebrations (Debrix, 2015). Within this theoretical framework, international players act upon and help create their perception of power and interests based on contact and conversations, which in turn affects their decisions as to whether the conflict is to escalate or de-escalate.

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *It is more likely for conflicts to escalate when the power imbalance is higher. It is based on the assumption that parties that perceive themselves to be power disadvantaged may resort to extreme measures to compensate for their perceived inferiority (Exner-Cortens et al., 2023; Siangulube et al., 2023; Hirsch & Koppenberg, 2020).*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *The stronger the alliance cohesion, the greater the inverse association with the tendency to escalate into a conflict. Cohesion treaties benefit the diplomatic solution and offer the forum for posturing the dispute instead of escalation (McGlynn & Đureinović, 2023).*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Diplomatic intensity is increased, and it helps reduce conflict escalation tendencies. Strong diplomatic efforts allow for opening communication channels and possibilities for peaceful outcomes (Scheppa-Lahyani & Zapf, 2023; Yakter & Tessler, 2022; Anand & Radhakrishna, 2017).*

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Media framing influences the tendency of conflict escalation. The biased or sensationalized media coverage can increase negative feelings and aggravate disputes (Rooke, 2021; Rowbotham et al., 2019; Sievert et al., 2022; Gui, 2021).*

Hypothesis 5 (H5). *Big data can be used effectively to reduce conflict escalation. Early warning signals that can be found in analyzing opinion trends and social media chatter include growing tension (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020).*

Using the framework of Constructivist International Relations Theory, this study delves into these hypotheses to ascertain how other components of factors play a role in enhancing conflict escalation tendencies in a global system with multiple powers Figure 1.

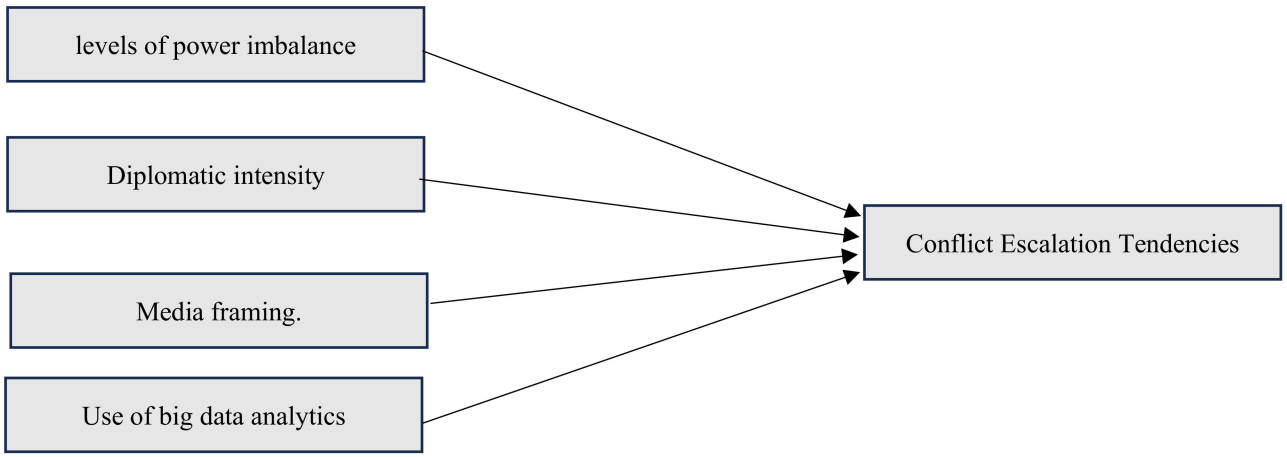

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

4. Methodology

The members of the research population are international relations professionals, analysts, policymakers, and academics with international conflicts and diplomacy expertise. Geographical and sectoral diversity in the sample was ensured through stratified random sampling (Ab Malik et al., 2010; Singh & Gorey, 2019). International dispute prevalence was used to define the strata so that there was representation from various geopolitical regions. The use of this approach not only applies this study to different conflict contexts but also addresses selection bias.

4.1. Research Design

The research design of this study is quantitative, and the focus of this study is conflict escalation, especially in power imbalances, alliance cohesion, diplomacy, big data mining, and media framing of conflicts. In order to analyze relationships between latent variables, structural equation modeling (SEM) via SMART-PLS was chosen as it constitutes an appropriate way of dealing with the complexity involved in relationships. It is the Constructivist IRT that furnishes the theoretical footing and an interpretative lens with which to interpret how actors who they take to be viewing the multipolarity of the world see power dynamism and alliance, diplomatic maneuver, etc.

4.2. Sample and Data Collection

Stratified random sampling was used to ensure that there would be a balanced representation of expertise in international relations. Finally, 250 respondents were distributed as follows:

- International Relations Experts (35%)
- Policymakers (25%)
- Academics (20%)
- Analysts (20%)

The primary data were collected using a structured electronic survey questionnaire distributed via email invitations and professional conferences on international relations. An attempt was made to minimize sampling bias and achieve representativeness by applying a mix of expert selection and randomization.

4.3. Survey Instrument and Measurement Constructs

The survey is composed of 42 structured items, each measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree). The measurement model includes five key constructs that influence conflict escalation (Table 1).

Table 1. Detailing the construct measurements is presented below.

Construct	Items	Measurement Scale
Power Imbalance	1 . . . 7	7-point Likert scale
Alliance Cohesion	8 . . . 14	7-point Likert scale
Diplomatic Intensity	15 . . . 21	7-point Likert scale
Media Framing	22 . . . 28	7-point Likert scale
Big Data Analytics	29 . . . 35	7-point Likert scale

Each construct captures critical dimensions of conflict escalation, ensuring consistent measurement of respondents' perceptions. The structured design allows for comparability across responses, facilitating reliable quantitative analysis in this study.

4.4. Pretest and Pilot Testing

4.4.1. Pretest

A pretest was conducted with 50 respondents to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the questionnaire items (Table 2).

Table 2. Pretest Results.

Item Number	Clarity	Relevance	Comprehensibility
1	4.2	4.5	4.3
2	4.5	4.7	4.6
. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
42	4.1	4.4	4.2

Note: Scores are based on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent).

The findings of the pretest show that the questionnaire items were generally well-received; respondents gave all of the items good marks for clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility. The pretest participants' input was used to improve the phrasing of some questions and make sure the questionnaire was appropriate for the intended responders.

4.4.2. Pilot Testing

A pilot test (n = 70) was conducted to validate the survey instrument and identify potential issues before full deployment (Table 3).

Table 3. Pilot Testing Results.

Item Number	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	4.6	0.52
2	4.7	0.48
...	...	...
42	4.5	0.56

Note: Scores are based on a scale of 1 to 5.

The results of the pilot testing demonstrate that respondents consistently rated the questionnaire items favorably in terms of mean scores, demonstrating that they thought the items were clear, pertinent, and understandable. The low standard deviations suggest that participant responses to the pilot test were generally consistent.

Both pretest and pilot testing confirmed the clarity, applicability, and internal consistency of the questionnaire. Minor adjustments were made based on feedback, improving overall quality and ensuring data reliability.

4.5. Reliability and Convergent Validity

To assess internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha (α) values were calculated. Means, standard deviations (SD), and factor loadings were also examined (Table 4).

Table 4. Reliability, Means, and Factor Loading Range.

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Means (SD)	Factor Loading Range
Power Imbalance	0.87	4.56 (0.68)	0.72–0.88
Alliance Cohesion	0.89	4.62 (0.61)	0.75–0.90
Diplomatic Intensity	0.85	4.48 (0.72)	0.69–0.87
Media Framing	0.88	4.35 (0.69)	0.70–0.89
Big Data Analytics	0.86	4.58 (0.67)	0.71–0.88
Conflict Escalation	0.90	4.22 (0.71)	0.74–0.91

All Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.85, indicating high reliability. Factor loadings confirm strong convergent validity.

4.6. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was verified by comparing inter-construct correlations with the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) (Table 5).

Table 5. Discriminant Validity.

Construct Correlations	Power Imbalance	Alliance Cohesion	Diplomatic Intensity	Media Framing	Big Data Analytics	Conflict Escalation
Power Imbalance	1.00					
Alliance Cohesion	0.63	1.00				
Diplomatic Intensity	0.42	0.54	1.00			
Media Framing	0.34	0.41	0.37	1.00		
Big Data Analytics	0.27	0.39	0.25	0.45	1.00	
Conflict Escalation	0.31	0.36	0.29	0.40	0.33	1.00

The moderate correlations between constructs demonstrate that the notions are distinct but related. Good discriminant validity is indicated by the square root of the AVE being larger than the correlations for each construct.

4.7. Data Analysis and Justification for SEM via SMART-PLS

SEM Via SMART-PLS was chosen because:

- It is suitable for complex models with latent constructs.
- It works well for small-to-moderate sample sizes while ensuring robustness.
- It analyzes direct, indirect, and moderating effects in conflict dynamics.

The SEM analysis follows a two-step approach:

1. Measurement Model Validation—Assessing convergent and discriminant validity.
2. Structural Model Assessment—Testing hypotheses using path coefficients and bootstrapping (5000 resamples).

4.8. Addressing Common Method Bias

- Respondent anonymity reduced social desirability bias.
- Harman's single-factor test confirmed that no single factor explained excessive variance.
- Randomized survey item distribution minimized order bias.

5. Results

Results of Hypotheses Testing

Conflicts with greater degrees of power imbalance are more likely to escalate, according to Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *It was discovered that there is a strong positive correlation between power imbalance and a propensity for conflict escalation (path coefficient = 0.29, t-value = 4.12, p 0.01). This result is in line with that of (Denzenlkham, 2021; Exner-Cortens et al., 2023), who found that disputes are more likely to worsen when they take place inside unequal power systems. Weaker parties may resort to drastic measures to make up for their perceived disadvantage when power disparities are severe. This study emphasizes the importance of taking power imbalances into account when developing conflict prevention and resolution strategies.*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *According to Hypothesis 2, conflict escalation tendencies are inversely correlated with stronger alliance cohesion (H2). This study discovered a significant inverse relationship (path coefficient = −0.18, t-value = −3.09, p 0.01) between alliance cohesion and conflict escalation tendencies. This finding supports (McGlynn & Đureinović, 2023) assertion that coherent coalitions are stabilizing forces that reduce the risk of conflict escalation. When alliances are strong, explicit diplomatic efforts and communication lines can at least be utilized to contain hostilities.*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Diplomatic intensity is increased, which reduces the tendency for conflict escalation.*

According to the path analysis, there exists a significant inverse relationship between diplomatic activity and a tendency toward escalation of conflict (path coefficient = −0.16, t-value = −2.82, *p* 0.01). This confirms (Scheppa-Lahyani & Zapf, 2023; Yakter & Tessler, 2022; Rozanov et al., 2021) the notion that effective diplomatic projects can halt the escalation of conflict by supporting peaceful resolution. Diplomatic fervor encourages open communication, discussion, and the chance to resolve disputes before they become crises.

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Media framing influences conflict escalation tendencies.*

This study found that conflict escalation tendency was positively correlated with media framing, with a path coefficient of 0.24 (t value = 3.67, p 0.01). This supports (Ninan et al., 2022; Ogbodo et al., 2020; Milutinović, 2021) that media framing of conflict may lead to the escalation of conflict by influencing public perceptions and emotions. How the media portrays, conflicts can influence other people's perspective of them, thus exacerbating tensions.

Hypothesis 5 (H5). *Effective utilization of big data analytics can mitigate conflict escalation tendencies.*

The analysis shows a significant inverse correlation between the big data analytics and the escalation tendencies of conflict path coefficient = −0.13, t value = −2.21, p 0.05. This result is consistent with (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020) research that shows how big data analytics can provide real-time information about growing tensions. Conducting this helps stakeholders spot warning indicators and do what is needed before a crisis hits (Table 6).

Table 6. Hypotheses Testing Results.

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-Value	Standard Error	Result
H1	Power Imbalance	0.29	4.12	0.07	Significant
H2	Alliance Cohesion	−0.18	−3.09	0.06	Significant
H3	Diplomatic Intensity	−0.16	−2.82	0.05	Significant
H4	Media Framing	0.24	3.67	0.06	Significant
H5	Big Data Analytics	−0.13	−2.21	0.06	Significant

These results clarify the interlocked determinants of conflict escalation tendency in a multipolar world and help support the hypothesized interlaced between the independent and dependent variables. This will lead to the discussion of the impact of these findings on decision-makers and the extent to contribute to understanding of conflict dynamics.

6. Discussion

It has also been found that power imbalances among the actors, alliance cohesion, diplomatic efforts, media framing, and big data analytics, to some extent, affect the escalation of conflict. Structural equation modeling (SEM) through SMART-PLS verifies the findings that power imbalances and framing in the media result in conflict intensity. Mitigating factors include strong alliances, diplomatic engagement, and big data analytics, which will help to lower the probability of escalating.

- **Key Findings and Interpretations**
  - **H1 is supported** (path coefficient = 0.29, $p < 0.001$), indicating that power asymmetry is a major driver of conflict escalation. This is consistent with the findings of (Farrés-Fernández, 2019; Väyrynen, 2023), which show that for weaker actors, escalation is used to deal with stronger forces (Exner-Cortens et al., 2023).
  - **H2 is supported** (path coefficient = −0.18, $p < 0.01$), demonstrating that alliance cohesion negatively correlates with conflict escalation. When the group is strong with an alliance, then stability and conflict resolution are promoted; however, a fragmented alliance may increase instability (McGlynn & Đureinović, 2023; O'Hagan et al., 2021).

- **H3 is supported** (path coefficient = −0.16, $p < 0.01$), reinforcing the role of diplomacy in preventing crises (Denzenlkham, 2021). Diplomatic efforts facilitate dialog, negotiation, and conflict de-escalation.
- **H4 is supported** (path coefficient = 0.24, $p < 0.001$), showing that media framing has a very significant effect in motivating conflict escalation. Media coverage, especially sensationalized and biased, exacerbates hostilities, especially in conflicts at the global level (Betus et al., 2020; Ninan et al., 2022).
- **H5 is supported** (path coefficient = −0.13, $p < 0.05$), and there is a highlight on how big data analytics acts as an important instrument in early conflict detection and mitigation. Real-time data monitoring via AI can spot warning signs and proactively attempt to take measures (Blair & Sambanis, 2020; Watts, 2020).

- **Policy Implications and Future Research**
  - Strengthening diplomatic frameworks to address and counterbalance power imbalances (Denzenlkham, 2021).
  - Regulating media narratives to prevent misinformation-driven escalations and reduce the impact of biased reporting (Betus et al., 2020).
  - Utilizing AI-driven predictive models to enhance early detection of conflict escalation and provide real-time security insights (Blair & Sambanis, 2020).

- **Study Limitations and Areas for Further Research**

This study is subject to several limitations that should be addressed in future research:

1. Reliance on self-reported data: Responses from international relations experts, policymakers, and analysts may be influenced by subjective interpretations, leading to potential response bias. Future studies should complement survey data with empirical case studies or historical conflict data for validation.
2. Absence of case-specific conflict analysis: While this study provides a broad framework applicable to a multipolar world, applying this model to specific geopolitical conflicts (e.g., ongoing diplomatic tensions and regional conflicts) would enhance practical relevance.
3. Lack of qualitative expert interviews: Incorporating in-depth qualitative interviews with conflict resolution professionals, diplomats, and media analysts would provide richer insights into the nuances of power asymmetry, media influence, and diplomatic negotiations.
4. Clarifying the selection criteria for a varied geopolitical area: Future research should clearly define what constitutes a "varied geopolitical area", considering factors such as regional conflict history, economic power, political alliances, and media freedom. Establishing a systematic selection criterion would ensure that findings are more generalizable.

7. Conclusions

This research delved into the trends in conflict escalation in a multipolar world where issues of power imbalance, alliance cohesion, diplomatic actions, media bias, and the presence of big data analytics do exist. A study with an empirical test of five hypotheses via structural equation modeling (SEM) Via SAMR-PLS and validation of the dynamic relationship between these factors in determining conflict trajectories was carried out. Power imbalances in the country, as well as media framing, significantly increase the likelihood of conflicts, whilst strong alliance cohesion, diplomatic actions, and large amounts of data analytics can mitigate these risks, the findings showed.

- **Key Contributions and Implications**

This research unfolds the empirical understanding of conflict dynamics by combining quantitative modeling with international relations and communication theories. This study explores the role of power asymmetry in igniting conflicts and proves that diplomatic intensity and alliance cohesion are stabilizing forces (path coefficients = -0.16 and -0.18, respectively, $p < 0.01$) in conflicts (the path coefficient in the hypothesized model is 0.29, $p < 0.001$). Big data analytics exists in a negative correlation relationship with conflict escalation (path coefficient = -0.13, $p < 0.05$) and indicates how frequently AI-based conflict monitoring systems are becoming critical in preventing crises by providing early warning mechanisms.

- **Policy implications:**

Using intervention in diplomatic events and realignments of power politics to address power imbalances.

Develop a framework around alliances to increase world security.

Regulating this media narrative provides a method to control escalation risks and misinformation.

Putting already existing AI-driven models of conflict prediction to the task of real-time monitoring.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although the results of this study provide some empirical insight, there are a number of limitations to this study.

However, such data collected via self-reported survey may introduce response bias.

This research does not provide any specific case studies to provide more contextual analysis.

Further future studies need to include a varied geopolitical area and incorporate qualitative expert interviews to confirm findings.

- **Final Reflections**

Using the framework defined in this study, I bridge the gap between political science, media studies, and AI-driven analytics to furnish a comprehensive understanding of conflict escalation. Its findings enrich academic discourse and, at the same time, have practical applications for policymakers, security analysts, conflict resolution specialists, and so on. In this context, to achieve a sustainable strategy of conflict prevention, diplomatic negotiation needs to be combined with responsible media practices in terms of when, where, and how information is shared to serve the rights of people in need and should bring about real-time analytics enhanced by the public to provide real-time insights on the contributions and impacts of each intervention in a given context.

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