

Research Article

Minimum Essential Force (MEF) Strategy: A Systematic Literature Review in the Context of Globalization

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Abstract.

The primary objective of this study is to perform a systematic analysis of research references associated with the Minimum Essential Force in the defense and security or military sector over the past decade (2013 to 2023). The current study examines the development trend of Minimum Essential Force research in these sectors using Google Scholar data. The current investigation employs qualitative research combined with the literature review process. It gathered data using the web crawling technique from the Google Scholar database. This study concludes that the volume of research on Minimum Essential Force from 2013 to 2023 can be described as consistently increasing. However, each article was published by a distinct journal. This phenomenon indicates that there is no established journal on this topic. In addition, development maps based on keyword co-occurrence are clustered into two categories. The research is limited by the content of the articles used, which were extracted from the Google Scholar database. In the future, in addition to conducting research with broader literature sources, the recommendations provided in this study can be used as hypotheses for in-depth, comprehensive subsequent studies. The findings of this study will likely be useful as a resource for scholars who wish to examine the Minimum Essential Force policy. The literature and bibliometric study on the issue of Minimum Essential Force is possibly the first systematic literature review carried out in Indonesia.

Keywords: globalization, minimum essential force, systematic review, national army, military

1. Introduction

The digital era necessitates the development of the strategic and national environment in a very dynamic era of globalization such as the one that we are living in today [1-4]. The encourages the policy of the national defense force to be constantly reviewed to look for new breakthroughs related to the development of the national defense force in the context of facing threats, disturbances, obstacles, and challenges in the future in accordance with the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the military. The development of this national defense power is carried out through the development

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strategy of the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) in an integrated policy with the digital transformation integrated and sustainable as defined in the MEF policy. In an era marked by rapid globalization, businesses and economies worldwide grapple with the formidable challenge of efficiently allocating resources to remain competitive and resilient. The military-derived concept of the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) strategy, which stresses the efficient allocation of the bare minimum yet adequate resources to achieve a specific objective, has emerged as a beacon of strategic thinking within the realm of global business and economics. This policy was developed to carry out the development of this national defense power [5,6].

Indonesia's understanding of MEF was primarily related to its defense strategy. Over time, this strategy's principles began to find application in other sectors linked including business and economics. As Indonesian businesses began to venture into global markets, the need for efficiency, agility, and optimal resource allocation became paramount. Many businesses, especially those with limited resources, began employing a strategy resembling MEF to defend sovereignty, focusing on allocating resources where they could get the maximum return, streamlining operations to cater to core strengths, and adapting quickly to international market trends with defense industry. The MEF strategy for Indonesian National Army (TNI) was designed to ensure Indonesia maintains a resilient defense capability, especially given its vast archipelago and diverse challenges. The essence of MEF is efficiency, appropriateness, and swift responsiveness. While this approach has defense origins, the underlying principles of MEF have parallels in the business and economic arenas. TNI's focus on MEF has often involved procuring from domestic defense industries. This not only boosts the national defense sector but also has ripple effects on job creation, technological advancements, and local economies. In a comparable way, the Indonesian Army needs to concentrate its efforts on the defense technological capacities of digitalization setting to improve its security instruments. A stable defense posture, which is the essence of MEF, provides a conducive environment for foreign investments, which view political and security stability as crucial factors. As a result, it is essential for the TNI to place a primary emphasis on the transformation of its MEF resources into an engine for army development and national competitiveness. With a high turnover of foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the digital environment, the Indonesian Armed Forces will strengthen the impact that global forces have on national security as well as the international potential of global powers and geopolitical economic posture.

Both military and non-military threats have taken on novel shapes because of globalization's proliferation of new sources and types of dangers, which have been brought to the nations of the world. Businesses in Indonesia, learning from the TNI's MEF approach, often employ risk-averse strategies, ensuring they remain resilient to global economic shocks. The lean and effective nature of MEF inspires businesses to adopt similar strategies, streamlining operations, and focusing on core strengths are a combination of several kinds of risks, methods, players, scenarios, and strategies to boost economic power through military posture. Just as the TNI's MEF strategy emphasizes swift responsiveness, Indonesian businesses in a globalized context have become adept at quickly adapting to global market trends and shifts. To avoid becoming a target for more developed nations, emerging nations like Indonesia need to demonstrate the ability to confront and adjust to the disruptions brought on by advances in technology, information, and communication [7-9].

When globalization takes place in a nation, it will have an effect not just on ideology and politics but also on economics, socio-culture, defense and security, and other aspects of everyday existence. Globally, worldwide is going through significant and substantial changes, which are involving both state actors and non-state players. As a result, all the countries in the world are being pushed to adjust their strategies from time to time. Changes in strategy implemented by countries throughout the world have also resulted in changes in the form and nature of threats at the national, regional, and worldwide levels, which are becoming more technologically advanced, digitized, multi-dimensional, and complex [10-13]. These changes have been brought about as a direct consequence of the changes in strategy.

Based on this phenomenon, the purpose of this study is to conduct a methodical analysis of Indonesia, as one of the most dynamic economies in the ASEAN region, has been profoundly impacted by the tidal forces of globalization. Its strategic geographical location, burgeoning population, and diverse resources make it a significant player in the international arena. As such, Indonesia's adaptation and response to globalization provide an essential lens to understand broader trends. This paper seeks to correlate Indonesia's adoption of the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) Strategy a concept rooted originally in military doctrine with its economic and business strategies in the face of globalization.

2. Literature Review

The data for the literature that was employed in this study was gathered from Scopus publications. These data were then subjected to a critical analysis utilizing a technique that was based on a literature review. This approach is a methodology for doing a critical study of research that is being carried out on certain themes, in this case, Minimum Essential Force through a variety of literary sources [14-16]. In the framework of military, security and economic, the MEF mandate is an element of Indonesian national policy. Strategic Plan 1 covers the years 2010–2014, Strategic Plan 2 covers the years 2015–2019, and Strategic Plan 3 covers the years 2020–2024. These three Strategic Plans or called Renstra make up the overall execution of the MEF. The development of the strategic environment, along with the rapid development of defense equipment technology, has changed the paradigm of warfare and the way that fighting takes place [5, 17].

Digital transformation allows for faster and more efficient economic operations. However, if one nation has significant control or influence over another's digital infrastructure or platforms, it can exercise economic leverage, which can be used as a non-military form of aggression. By the end of the year 2020, it was projected that over 82 million individuals had been infected with COVID-19, with approximately 1.8 million deaths being reported; however, it is quite likely that both of these figures will be greatly understated [18,19]. Although the pandemic did not have a direct impact on the way military conflicts were conducted in 2020, it did lead to an increase in the number of cyberattacks and business disruption. The cyberattacks also had major repercussions on both the economy and the political system. This information has been reported in at least 20 nations throughout the world because of the incident involving cyber-attacks, and it has contributed to military hybrid warfare. Both state actors and non-state actors are capable of launching cyberattacks against one another. The threat posed by military hybrid warfare is illustrated by both attacks. ISIS digital propaganda [20,21]; Russian military cyberattacks on important Ukrainian facilities [22,23]; Chinese cyberattacks through cyberwarfare in several nations [24,25]; Australian cyberattacks on critical infrastructure [26,27]. This would require the development of a robust cyber defense capability, continuous monitoring of digital platforms, ensuring the integrity of the supply chain, and educating the populace about potential propaganda or misinformation campaigns. Moreover, building international alliances and cooperation mechanisms can also help in collectively defending against such non-military threats.

2.1. Assumption

Minimum Essential Force (MEF) refers to the military doctrine that emphasizes maintaining only the necessary force levels to ensure a nation's defense and deter potential adversaries. This literature review delves into the concept of MEF, especially in the context of globalization and its interlinkage with business and economic factors. The purpose is to gain an understanding of the strategies and implications surrounding the concept and how it has evolved in the era of globalization. MEF emerged as a response to the financial constraints and changing geopolitical landscapes. The focus shifted from large standing armies to efficient, technologically advanced forces that can respond quickly and effectively to threats. Globalization, characterized by the integration of economies, trade, cultures, and technology, has significantly impacted defense strategies. MEF has become more prominent as countries seek to balance defense priorities with global economic responsibilities.

3. Methodology Research

This study makes use of qualitative research methods [28-30], combining them with the method of literature reviews (see Figure 1 for further explanation). This research makes use of publication data from 2013 to 2023 that contains the terms Minimum Essential Force, which was gathered through the web scraping approach and obtained from the Google Scholar database [31,32].

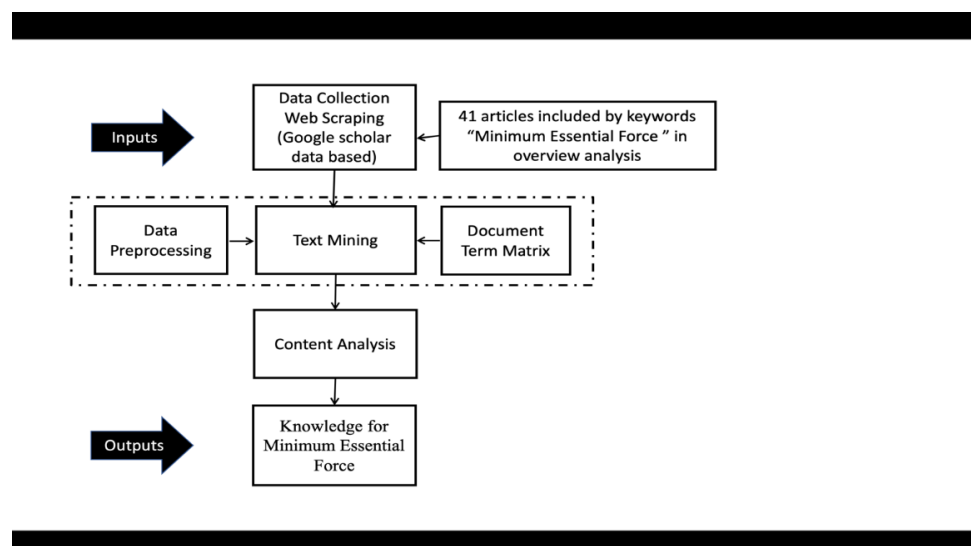


Figure 1: Literature review Process. **Source:** The author's own study, 2023.

In addition, the VOS viewer program was used to analyze the data pertaining to the number of publications that were produced each year, the journals that contained articles, the authors, and the subjects. Additionally, publishing development trends may be analyzed with the help of this software, and the process is finished off with qualitative content analysis. VOS viewer is a piece of software that allows users to construct and visualize bibliometric networks. These networks may consist of individual researchers, publications, or journals, and they may be constructed via citations, bibliographical merging, co-citations, or relationships between co-authors. Text mining is another feature offered by VOS viewer. This feature allows users to construct and visualize co-occurrence networks based on key phrases collected from published scientific research [33,34] (see Figure 2).

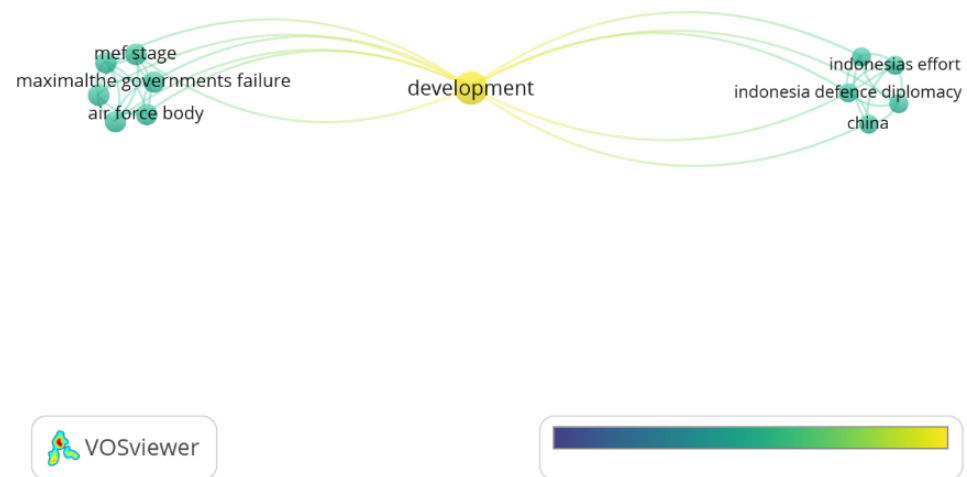


Figure 2: Tendencies in the distribution of scientific literature among the Minimum Essential Force from 2013 to 2023. **Source:** The author's own study, 2023

4. Results and Discussion

According to the findings of the research, between the years 2013 and 2015, there were a total of eight studies published that investigated this subject. In the meantime,

there was a 50% increase in the number of articles from 2016 to 2018, bringing the total to 12. Studies on this subject appear to demonstrate a reasonably constant trend moving forward, particularly as shown by the number of papers from 2019 to 2023 with a total of 21 references. This indicates that there is not a single publisher that holds a dominant position in relation to the Minimum Essential Force study. Applied Quantitative Economics [35], Innovation [36], Energy Security [37], and the Center for Budget Studies [38] are just a few of the study scopes covered by the several publications that publish articles on this subject. Other research scopes include International Policy [39], Defense Industry [40], Artificial Intelligence study [6], Industrial Engineering [41], Diplomacy, and Industrial Engineering. The results of the study demonstrate that when evaluated from the perspective of the scope of journals that speak a lot about Minimum Essential Force concerns, most of them are journals with a background or scope of policy, defense, security, business, and economics related with MEF. This was discovered when the scope of the journals was analyzed. According to these findings, the problem of Minimum Essential Force is still only considered in a very limited capacity within the context of research management.

4.1. A Comprehensive Investigation of the Indonesian Minimum Essential Force Policy, Business, and Economic Aspects

Defense spending and economic growth are intertwined in complex ways. For Indonesia, as a major player in Southeast Asia with a vast archipelago, understanding the dynamics between defense expenditure and its economic performance is pivotal for its strategic interests. In terms of percentage of GDP, Indonesia's defense spending has hovered around 0.7% to 1% in recent years. This is relatively modest compared to global standards, but the absolute numbers have been rising given Indonesia's economic growth. In addition, Indonesia's defense budget has seen a gradual increase in absolute terms, reflecting the country's rising GDP and its aspirations to modernize its military. As Indonesia's economy has grown, it has allowed the nation to invest in modernizing its armed forces, procurement of modern equipment, and boosting its naval capabilities. There's an increasing emphasis on the development of the domestic defense industry. This not only ensures that a portion of defense expenditure flows back into the domestic economy but also promotes technological advancements and job creation. As a result, while defense spending is essential for national security, it also represents funds that could be allocated elsewhere, such as infrastructure, health, or education. It's a delicate

balancing act to ensure sustained economic growth while maintaining security to be utilized in the context of military, economic and policy aspects.

According to the analysis presented in the article, the subject that is the primary focus of the research is the linked defense, economic, business, and diplomacy aspects between Indonesia and China in the minimum essential force policy during the years 2004 to 2014, which occurred during Indonesia's ambitions to become a leading state in Southeast Asia. Lubis writes in his research that "Indonesia carries out defense diplomacy with China and developing a Minimum Essential Force (MEF) policy as part of Indonesia's effort to become a leading state in the Southeast Asian region, as well as part of Indonesia's national interests in the defense sector" [42]. The years between 2004 and 2023 saw a dynamic relationship between Indonesia and China, with both nations navigating defense, economic, business, and diplomatic domains intricately. Indonesia's Minimum Essential Force policy, while ensuring the nation's defense capabilities were updated, also respected the multifaceted nature of its relationship with China, highlighting the intricate balance between security and diplomacy in a rapidly changing region. With China's increasing assertiveness in the South China Sea, Indonesia, though not a claimant, has been compelled to reassess its defense posture, especially around the Natuna Islands. However, numerous papers also highlighted several other countries as research topics, including the United States of America [39] and South Korea [43,44]. Indonesia's MEF and broader defense considerations were not just bilateral. The nation engaged with other regional powers like India, Australia, and Japan, aiming for a balanced and stable Indo-Pacific. Even this data analysis demonstrates that the problem of Minimum Essential Force is still being mentioned very infrequently within the context of research management.

According to the findings of the review, the concerns that are frequently voiced include those that are associated with the administration of the policy on the use of the Minimum Essential Force. Priyono, in his study titled "Evaluating the implementation of the minimum essential force (MEF) policy on the posture of TNI officers in Management & business journals of the air force alliance," stated that the MEF Policy in the Indonesian Air Force should be implemented particularly officers as the backbone to catch up effectivity, efficiency, equity, and responsiveness of implementation management system in the Indonesian Air Force organization was found to be more effective [45]. This was found to be the case because the Indonesian Air Force Organization The purpose of this study was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the evaluation of the implementation of the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) policy in the Indonesian Airforce's

maintenance of human resources, with a particular emphasis on officers. In addition, the research that was conducted by Andalus and Sjujandi intends to investigate how the policy for the acquisition of defense equipment is carried out within the framework of the Minimum Essential Force, often known as the MEF [46]. They employ a methodology known as qualitative-descriptive research. According to the findings of their research, even if the human resources in the Indonesian defense industry are in the process of developing to become even better, the financial resources are a factor that has a major impact on the success of the MEF compliance policy. This is the case even though human resources are still in the process of developing.

Several scholars are concerned about a variety of topics, including those pertaining to finances [47,36,38]. These concerns are in addition to concerns surrounding the implementation of MEF policies. This study provides confirmation that the visualization that appears in network analysis is a representation of concerns that are frequently addressed. The research was based on themes that are frequently the subject of inquiry.

Even though one of the scenarios that are frequently linked to the policy of the Minimum Essential Force is technological adaptation or digitalization. Several studies, however, conducted a literature evaluation, and they all concluded that there was no research that specifically focused on this subject. This study completely formulates research that needs to be carried out in the future, one of which is related to organizational transformation and digitalization. It does this by basing its formulation on the framing context of network analysis and receiving support from a variety of literature on Minimum Essential Force. In the context of the Minimum Essential Force, this issue is still being examined and confirmed empirically a very small fraction of the time.

5. Conclusion

According to the findings and the discussion of this research, it is possible to conclude that the growth in the topic area of the Minimum Essential Force, Business, and Economic aspects from 2013 to 2023 on data based on Google Scholar can be continually increasing. This conclusion is based on the findings of the study as well as the discussion of the findings. On the other hand, this assessment additionally condenses the most recent MEF research trends into four primary concerns. It is interesting to note that although this program is a strategy employed by the Indonesian government, of some emerging countries including China, the United States of America, and South Korea. This is even though Indonesia is a developing nation. These nations are frequently

brought up in conversations in relation to the two countries' engagement in bilateral cooperation. Second, the results of the data analysis demonstrate that most of the study uses a qualitative method and case studies. This conclusion was drawn from the type of research approach that was employed.

Third, when the context or scope of the research is taken into consideration, related studies are dominated by several different academic subfields, including public policy, economics, politics, and security. Even this data analysis demonstrates that the problem of Minimum Essential Force is still being mentioned very infrequently within the context of research management. Fourth, according to the findings of the review, the concerns that are frequently voiced include those that are associated with the administration of the policy on the use of the Minimum Essential Force. Concerns raised by several experts relate not only to problems with the MEF's policy but also to problems with the organization's finances, business, management, and economic aspects. In the context of the Minimum Essential Force, this issue is still being examined and confirmed empirically a very small fraction of the time. The extent of the papers that were used for the research, all of which were obtained from the Google Scholar database, is the cause of the study's limitation. In the future, in addition to research with wider literature sources, the recommendations in this study can also be utilized as hypotheses, in addition to being used in follow-up research that is extensive and in-depth. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will serve as a reference for academics who seek to investigate the policy of using the Minimum Essential Force.

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