

RISK DISPOSITION AND MULTI-DOMAIN STRATEGIC STABILITY: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION”

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ABSTRACT:

This research provides initial empirical testing of the relationship between deterrent threat clarity and risk disposition across multiple conflict environments. Contemporary U.S. policy documents advance that the effectiveness of measures to mitigate the threat of WMD/WME hinges on accurately understanding and responding to adversaries’ risk disposition. However, the threat clarity-risk disposition relationship hypothesized in those documents has never been empirically tested.

If funded, this project will expand on a successful pilot study and conduct a series of decision experiments grounded in prospect theory and designed to examine the threat clarity-risk disposition relationship. Results from this study provide the needed empirical support for resolving important questions, including: To what extent can prospect theory explain variation of risk disposition in the deterrence environment? How does risk disposition affect one’s response to varying levels of deterrent threat clarity? To what extent is the risk disposition-threat clarity relationship affected by conflict domain (e.g. conventional, chemical, cyber, nuclear) and/or one’s level of knowledge about deterrence and military operations?

In addition, this research also serves public purposes by providing insights on the causes of WMD/WME crisis stability more broadly that are central to effective arms control and nonproliferation policies.

Research in Progress describes ongoing PASCC research. For more information please contact INSS@usafa.edu.