

## Maritime Strategic Thinking Culture of Small Island States: Sri Lankan Perspective

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This paper attempts to identify the reasoning behind the theoretical and philosophical comprehension of maritime strategies in small-state studies within the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Understanding the philosophical significance of maritime strategy is crucial for a nation to develop its own distinct strategy. As a small island state in the region, Sri Lanka is exposed to transnational maritime threats and challenges. To confront these diverse challenges in the maritime domain, states must formulate their own distinct maritime strategy by conducting analyses of geopolitical factors, maritime security risks, and economic considerations. The ancient philosophical tenets that have influenced the maritime strategies of civilizations cannot be overlooked. They have shaped states' decisions, reflecting their individual cultures and historical contexts. This knowledge is passed down through generations, and as a small state, Sri Lanka must integrate this knowledge into the process of formulating a maritime strategy and instill it within the state's strategic culture. The present research methods encompass both descriptive and analytical facets. The study acquired primary data through interviews and secondary data primarily from books and journals. The research reveals that Sri Lanka currently lacks a robust maritime strategy. Observations have identified an absence of cohesive functionalism in the formulation process of a maritime strategy. It is crucial to incorporate these theoretical and philosophical comprehensions of military and maritime warfare and strategic thinking in the development of maritime policies for Sri Lanka's maritime strategic culture.

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