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Review Article

Multi-Scale Coupling and Collaborative Governance in Complex Cyber-Physical-Economic Systems: A Cross-Domain Lifecycle Perspective

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***Abstract*:** As modern engineering infrastructures, intelligent vehicles, and distributed energy networks evolve into tightly coupled cyber-physical-economic systems, single-discipline optimization strategies prove increasingly insufficient for managing systemic vulnerabilities across operational lifecycles. Rather than assuming seamless cross-domain integration, this study examines the methodological tensions and institutional frictions inherent in aligning macro-level project financial governance with meso-scale multiphysics manufacturing and micro-level autonomous decision-making. By synthesizing analytical paradigms ranging from engineering-accounting integration and joint audit mechanisms in capital-intensive infrastructure to coupled multiphysics modeling, photovoltaic envelope optimization, and multi-agent reinforcement learning, we delineate a three-tier collaborative governance framework. Our critical appraisal suggests that while unified-datum tolerance coordination and lightweight edge sensing can, to some extent, mitigate hardware degradation and operational latency, scaling these localized gains into system-wide resilience remains contingent upon resolving multimodal data conflicts and principal-agent asymmetries. Considering these competing constraints, achieving robust lifecycle performance requires balancing physical model fidelity against computational tractability in dynamic environments. Ultimately, this cross-disciplinary inquiry reframes fragmented technical interventions as interdependent socio-technical processes, indicating that further empirical research is needed to establish adaptive digital-twin governance architectures capable of co-evolving with complex engineering realities.

Keywords: *Cyber-physical-economic systems; Multi-scale coupling; Lifecycle governance; Engineering-accounting integration; Multiphysics optimization; Intelligent decision-making;*

1. Introduction

Modern engineering systems are undergoing a profound structural transformation, shifting from isolated mechanical or civil artifacts toward deeply interconnected cyber-physical-economic (CPE) architectures. Whether examining capital-intensive public infrastructure, intelligent connected vehicles (V2X), distributed photovoltaic energy networks, or miniaturized wearable Internet of Things (IoT) terminals, the operational viability of these systems increasingly depends on the continuous interaction among physical hardware, embedded computational intelligence, and institutional financial rules. Yet, in actual academic inquiry and industrial practice, these three dimensions remain stubbornly compartmentalized. Civil engineers and financial auditors rarely share unified analytical ontologies; materials scientists optimizing multiphysics durability often operate independently of algorithm engineers designing edge inference models; and urban mobility planners frequently treat fleet dispatch algorithms as purely mathematical abstractions divorced from hardware aging and economic incentives.

Attempting to synthesize such heterogeneous domains into a single analytical framework inevitably exposes deep methodological tensions. During the initial conceptualization of this cross-domain investigation, an overly idealized assumption was made: that performance gains at the component level—such as superior thermal management in micro-batteries or tighter geometric

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tolerances in automotive manufacturing—would naturally aggregate into macro-level systemic resilience. Closer scrutiny of existing literature quickly challenged this linear view. In large-scale engineering projects, technical optimization frequently stalls not because of physical limits, but due to institutional friction, principal-agent asymmetries, and lagging financial governance. Conversely, in advanced manufacturing and distributed energy systems, ambitious economic or carbon-neutrality targets often outpace the physical realities of material degradation, multiphysics coupling, and sensor noise under non-stationary operating conditions.

These observations point toward a critical gap in contemporary systems engineering: the absence of a multi-scale governance paradigm capable of reconciling macro-level economic constraints, meso-level physical manufacturing realities, and micro-level algorithmic decision-making. Rather than offering a universal formula that artificially flattens domain-specific complexities, this study adopts a critical, multi-perspective synthesis. By examining how financial-engineering integration, multiphysics coupling analysis, and adaptive edge-to-cloud intelligence operate across distinct spatial and temporal scales, we aim to uncover both the transferable mechanisms and the persistent blind spots that characterize complex lifecycle governance.

2. Macro-Scale Governance: Engineering-Accounting Integration and Lifecycle Cost Control

At the macro scale of capital-intensive public infrastructure, systemic failure rarely manifests as an instantaneous physical collapse; rather, it emerges gradually through chronic capital inefficiency, contractual opportunism, and unchecked budget overruns. Traditional project management paradigms have historically treated engineering execution and financial accounting as sequential, loosely coupled functions, creating structural blind spots where technical scope creep translates into irreversible fiscal vulnerability.

2.1 Methodological Evolution of Engineering-Financial Alignment

Early attempts to evaluate infrastructure viability relied heavily on static ex-ante financial metrics, which often failed to capture the dynamic cost drivers embedded within complex construction workflows. To address this limitation, Chen [1] introduced a capital efficiency evaluation framework grounded in project financial-cost governance theory. While this approach successfully links macro-level capital allocation with project-level governance structures, its reliance on aggregated institutional indicators can, to some extent, obscure granular operational bottlenecks during active construction. Recognizing the need for tighter operational coupling, Peidi [3] proposed an empirical engineering-accounting integration model aimed at curbing cost-related financial losses specifically during the infrastructure delivery phase. By mapping physical engineering milestones directly onto real-time accounting ledgers, this methodology reduces reporting latency; however, its empirical generalizability remains sensitive to variations in organizational digital maturity and regional regulatory transparency.

Further refining the theoretical mechanisms behind fiscal discipline, Chen [4] examined cost-governance architectures designed to mitigate budget overruns in mega-projects. A critical reading of these governance models suggests that while formal cost-control rules establish necessary baseline constraints, they often struggle when confronted with exogenous supply-chain shocks or unforeseen geological complexities. In practice, rigid adherence to pre-set financial thresholds without corresponding engineering flexibility can inadvertently incentivize contractors to compromise on material quality, thereby transferring short-term financial savings into long-term lifecycle maintenance liabilities.

2.2 Institutional Risk Mitigation and Audit Intervention

A persistent driver of cost distortion in public-private and multi-tier contracting environments is the principal-agent problem, wherein contractors possess superior technical information regarding construction progress and latent defects compared to project owners. Peidi [6] addressed this asymmetry by formulating joint engineering-financial review procedures, demonstrating how synchronized technical and fiscal audits can constrain opportunistic billing and change-order inflation. Nevertheless, implementing joint reviews introduces non-trivial administrative overhead and potential friction between engineering supervisors and financial auditors, who often operate under divergent professional standards and risk tolerances.

To bridge this institutional divide, Chen [13] explored the integration of formal engineering management practices with Certified Public Accountant (CPA) auditing methodologies to preemptively control financial vulnerabilities. Bringing independent CPA

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scrutiny into the technical lifecycle enhances evidentiary rigor and accountability, yet this hybrid approach is not without interpretive limitations. Financial auditors may over-rely on verifiable historical documentation, potentially undervaluing forward-looking engineering risk assessments where empirical cost data are still evolving. Considering these institutional trade-offs, macro-scale cost governance cannot rely solely on tighter accounting rules; it requires an adaptive institutional culture where financial transparency and engineering judgment iteratively inform one another.

3. Meso-Scale Synergy: Multiphysics Coupling and Precision Control in Manufacturing and Energy Systems

Moving from macro-level institutional rules to the meso-scale physical artifacts of intelligent transportation and low-carbon architecture, system reliability hinges on managing complex interactions across thermal, mechanical, electromagnetic, and optical domains. Here, the primary analytical challenge lies in reconciling high-precision theoretical models with the messy variability of mass production and outdoor environmental exposure.

3.1 Multiphysics Integration and Quality Assurance in Intelligent Vehicles

Modern automotive platforms increasingly integrate sensing, communication, and structural functions into unified hardware assemblies, amplifying cross-domain physical interference. A representative example is the triple-functional integrated automotive laminated windshield glass analyzed by Jiang [9], who combined thermo-mechano-electromagnetic multiphysics coupling analysis with unified-datum tolerance coordination and full-lifecycle experimental verification. While this holistic modeling framework marks a significant advance over single-physics simulations by capturing how thermal gradients distort electromagnetic signal transmission and structural stress, its computational intensity poses challenges for rapid design iteration. Transitioning such complex designs into mass production introduces further geometric uncertainties. To tackle manufacturing deviations, Jiang [17] developed a multi-point geometric curvature inspection framework utilizing unified-datum decoupling, a region-aware adaptive NSGA-II sensor layout, and closed-loop mold compensation. Although multi-objective evolutionary optimization effectively balances inspection coverage against cycle time, the closed-loop compensation mechanism remains vulnerable to unmodeled viscoelastic springback variations across different glass batches. At the surface material level, Yan [10] evaluated the performance and weathering resistance of high UV-blocking coatings for automotive glass, highlighting how prolonged environmental exposure degrades optical clarity and thermal insulation—a finding that underscores the necessity of coupling initial manufacturing tolerances with long-term material aging kinetics.

Parallel reliability challenges emerge in vehicle-to-everything (V2X) wireless communication subsystems. Zhao [7] investigated automated testing methods for radio-frequency (RF) receiving sensitivity in V2X on-board terminals under multi-working conditions, revealing how fluctuating vehicular power loads and electromagnetic noise degrade receiver thresholds. To overcome the prohibitive cost and irreproducibility of field road testing, Yanbo [12] proposed a modular architecture for a multi-scenario simulation test platform capable of emulating diverse vehicular wireless signal environments. While modular simulation accelerates pre-deployment validation, synthetic channel models inevitably simplify real-world multipath scattering in dense urban canyons, creating a persistent simulation-to-reality gap. Furthermore, ensuring sustained communication integrity requires monitoring hardware health post-deployment; Zhao [14] addressed this by introducing an online monitoring and performance degradation evaluation method for automotive-grade RF power amplifiers under endurance aging. By tracking subtle shifts in gain and linearity, this diagnostic approach enables predictive maintenance, though distinguishing genuine component aging from transient thermal drift under extreme driving cycles requires further algorithmic refinement.

3.2 Multi-Scale Optimization in Photovoltaic and Low-Carbon Building Envelopes

Similar tensions between material innovation, structural durability, and environmental scalability characterize next-generation renewable energy and building systems. In marine and aquatic renewable energy deployment, Debnath et al. [2] reviewed next-generation floating photovoltaic (FPV) systems from a materials design and advanced fabrication perspective, emphasizing additive manufacturing and functionally graded materials (FGMs). By tailoring spatial material compositions, FGMs offer a promising pathway to withstand cyclic wave fatigue and saline corrosion; however, the high fabrication cost and limited build

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volume of current additive manufacturing technologies constrain their immediate commercial scalability for utility-scale FPV arrays.

Within the built environment, Baitong et al. [8] conducted a multidisciplinary systematic review of the scalability of building-integrated photovoltaics (BIPV), synthesizing architectural aesthetics, structural load-bearing constraints, electrical grid integration, and economic payback models. Their analysis reveals that BIPV adoption is frequently bottlenecked not by photovoltaic conversion efficiency alone, but by fragmented building codes and split incentives between property developers and utility operators. Extending this multi-scale perspective to tropical climates, Wang et al. [11] examined the mechanisms and integrated pathways for low-carbon healthy building envelopes, bridging micro-scale heat-moisture transfer coupling with building-level intelligent optimization. While multi-scale optimization demonstrably reduces cooling energy loads while maintaining indoor air quality, real-world occupant behavior—such as irregular window opening or manual shading adjustments—introduces stochastic disturbances that deterministic envelope models often fail to anticipate. Across both automotive and architectural domains, meso-scale optimization thus requires continuous calibration between high-fidelity physics and empirical operational variability.

4. Micro-Scale Intelligence: Edge Sensing, Hardware Safety, and Systemic Decision Optimization

4.1 Hardware Safety and Lightweight Perception in Edge IoT Terminals

Miniaturized wearable IoT devices exemplify the acute trade-off between functional autonomy, physical safety, and severely constrained energy and compute budgets. Focusing on wearable pet devices, Lin [5] designed a thermal runaway early warning and safety management system for polymer lithium-ion batteries. By monitoring subtle electro-thermal anomalies prior to catastrophic failure, this protection architecture enhances user and animal safety; nonetheless, the high energy density and compact packaging of miniature pouch cells leave narrow temporal margins between initial thermal onset and irreversible venting, demanding ultra-low-latency sensor polling that competes directly with battery standby life.

Beyond basic power safety, edge intelligence requires extracting reliable behavioral signals from noisy physical environments. Lin [16] developed an intelligent pet anti-barking collar control system grounded in multi-sensor fusion, combining acoustic and inertial measurements to suppress false triggers caused by ambient noise or physical movement. Complementing this hardware-level sensor fusion, Haipeng [15] proposed a dog bark recognition algorithm pairing Mel-frequency cepstral coefficients (MFCC) with a lightweight neural network. While MFCC feature extraction combined with compact neural architectures achieves high classification accuracy within the memory limits of low-power microcontrollers, such models can exhibit performance degradation when encountering unseen acoustic environments or atypical vocalizations across diverse breeds, pointing to an ongoing tension between model compression and out-of-distribution generalization[22][23][24].

4.2 Dynamic Fleet Rebalancing and Trustworthy Multimodal Reasoning

When individual edge nodes scale into city-wide cyber-physical networks and cloud-assisted decision systems, local optimization gives way to complex multi-agent coordination and information trustworthiness challenges. In shared electric mobility networks, spatial-temporal demand asymmetry rapidly depletes vehicle availability in high-demand zones. Luo et al. [20] initially formulated this challenge for expanding electric vehicle (EV) sharing systems using single-agent deep reinforcement learning to guide fleet rebalancing. Although deep reinforcement learning successfully captures non-linear demand fluctuations better than static heuristic rules, centralized single-agent formulations suffer from exponential action-space growth as fleet sizes and charging stations expand. To overcome this scalability bottleneck, Luo et al. [18] subsequently advanced a multi-agent deep reinforcement learning (MARL) approach, enabling decentralized regional agents to coordinate fleet rebalancing across expanding shared e-mobility networks. Despite improved scalability and responsiveness, MARL policies remain sensitive to non-stationary reward structures induced by competitor pricing, sudden weather disruptions, and heterogeneous charging infrastructure bottlenecks, which can destabilize cooperative convergence during deployment.

Finally, as human operators increasingly interact with complex engineering and mobility systems through multimodal interfaces and language-driven decision assistants, the integrity and consistency of underlying information representations become

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paramount. In the domain of covert multimodal communication and security, Hu et al. [19] improved text-image matching for multi-modal steganography by integrating adversarial learning with circle loss, thereby enhancing semantic alignment and resistance against steganalysis. While adversarial metric learning sharpens cross-modal feature discrimination, subtle distributional shifts in real-world media compression can still erode extraction robustness. Concurrently, in cloud-based knowledge reasoning, Cao et al. [21] addressed the pervasive issue of knowledge conflicts in language model-driven question answering, where retrieved external context contradicts a model's internal parametric memory. Developing conflict-mitigation mechanisms is essential for preventing plausible-sounding hallucinations in high-stakes engineering support; yet, determining whether parametric knowledge or noisy external telemetry holds ground truth in rapidly evolving operational environments remains an open epistemological and algorithmic problem.

5. Conclusion

Reflecting on the cross-domain synthesis developed across macro-level financial governance, meso-scale multiphysics engineering, and micro-level edge-to-cloud intelligence, it becomes evident that the resilience of complex cyber-physical-economic systems depends less on isolated breakthroughs within individual disciplines and more on how effectively the interfaces between institutional rules, physical degradation, and algorithmic decisions are negotiated. Rather than yielding a single unified optimization law, this investigation reveals that persistent engineering vulnerabilities—whether manifest as infrastructure budget overruns, automotive manufacturing tolerances, photovoltaic scaling bottlenecks, or multi-agent coordination instabilities—share a common structural root in unmodeled cross-scale feedback loops and information asymmetries. Practically, these insights suggest that engineering managers and system architects must move beyond sequential workflow handoffs toward co-designed governance architectures where real-time physical telemetry directly informs financial auditing and adaptive algorithmic control. Looking forward, further interdisciplinary research is needed to develop self-calibrating digital twin frameworks that integrate physics-informed machine learning with transparent institutional incentive structures, ultimately enabling complex socio-technical systems to co-evolve safely and sustainably amidst real-world uncertainty.

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Data will be made available on request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

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