Final Course Project

Information Security

**Project Title:** Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC)

1 Hussein Ali Salad 2Ahmed Muse Ahmed 3Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed 4Mohamed Hassan Abdi 5Mohamed Ahmed Mohamud 6Abdullahi Mohamed Ahmed 7Abdi Fatah Mohamed Abdi 8Amino Ahmed Nuur 9Sumaya Salad Sahal 10Sacdiya Salad Mohamed

# ABSTRACT

“Firstly, Thank God for everything we have done in this research project” This work is part of our final course project in Information Security, created by our group of ten students at SIMAD University.

In this project, we worked on building a new and simple encryption method called the Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC). Our main aim was to improve the weaknesses found in old ciphers like Caesar and Vigenère, and also Hill cipher which are somehow informal to break.  
  
We tested how strong this Algorithm is thru changing small parts of the input and key to see if the output changes a lot and it did. That shows our cipher is secure and unpredictable. We also compared it to other classic encryption methods and even to DES  
  
We found that E-RGMC works faster and uses less memory, making it good for devices like phones or small IoT systems. This project assisted us learn how to build and test a secure cipher using simple steps and clear logic.  
  
Ultimately: We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our Teacher **Adam Muhudin** for his invaluable guidance, support, and mentorship throughout the duration of this project Their insights and feedback have been involved in determining the direction and quality of this work.

# Keywords

1. *Symmetric Cipher*
2. *Grid-Based Encryption*
3. *E-RGMC*
4. *Simple Encryption Method*
5. *Modular Offset*
6. *Secure Communication*
7. *Frequency Analysis*
8. *Avalanche Effect*
9. *Lightweight Cryptography*

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# **CHAPTER 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

### Background and Importance

This chapter introduces today's digital world, protecting information And Cryptography which is the art of achieving security through encoding messages to make them non-readable in modern times cryptography is considered a branch of both mathematics and computer science and is affiliated closely with information theory, computer security and engineering. while mostly used in applications present in technologically advanced societies; examples include the security of ATM cards, computer passwords and electronic commerce, which all depend on cryptography(Cryptography Theory and Practice Fourth Edition, n.d.).

In today's technology, every second data are generated on the internet due to the online transaction. Based on that Cryptography is a necessary part of network security which allows the virtual world to be more secure. In many applications of our daily life information security plays a key role.

Most people send messages, store passwords, and share their personal data online every day. Because of this sharing, this information can easily be stolen or used in any way, both formal and not formal way. That's why Cryptography is a necessary part of network security to keep data secure and private(Fratini, 2002).

Symmetric encryption is one of the most common types, where the same secret key is used to lock (encrypt) and unlock (decrypt) a message. These process plaintext message will be converted into cipher text which can be decoded back into the original message using the secret key. Therefore, it is widely used in many systems such as mobile applications, file storage, and online communications.

There are several types of data encryption structures which form the basis of network security. Encryption schemes are generally based on either block or stream ciphers. Historically the focus of encryption has been on the use of symmetric encryption to offer confidentiality.

During our information security course, we learned about different encryption methods. Such monoalphabetic cipher and polyalphabetic cipher for example Caesar cipher, and Vigenere cipher which is very simple and easy to break(Rahim et al., 2016).

So based on that, we absolute need to design our own cipher called the Enhanced Rotating Cipher (E-RGMC) as a course project. It is more secure than the basic cipher but is still simple enough to learn and apply. E-RGMC uses a rotating network, key-based transformations, and position shifting to make the encryption stronger and more dynamic. This project helps us gain a deeper understanding of cryptography and gives us a practical way to apply what we have learned in class(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

### Problem Statement & Gap in Existing Methods

While learning about encryption in our Information Security course, we discovered that many classical ciphers like Caesar, and Hill are very easy to understand but not secure enough for today’s world. These Algorithms follow fixed rules and don’t change based on the message or key. For that reason, assailants can easily break them using simple techniques such as frequency analysis or mapping the key through brute force.

On the other hand, we found that modern encryption algorithms are extremely strong and widely trusted in the field. However, they are also extremely complex. Most of them use advanced mathematics and require a deep understanding of cryptography, which can be properly understood and applied in small projects(Coggins & Glatzer, 2020).

Another issue we noticed is that most simple ciphers apply the same encryption pattern every time, which makes them predictable. This lack of active performance makes it easier for someone to detect shapes in the ciphertext and eventually break the code. Strong encryption should not only hide the message but also change how it hides the message based on the key and position which is crucial in the modern algorithms.

We felt the need for an encryption method that is both educational and slightly more secure than what is usually taught in the course so we would generate an algorithm that is novel somehow with efficiency and verry secure(*A Symmetric Key Cryptographic*, n.d.).

That is why we decided to create the Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC). Our cipher is designed to aim secure information by converting it into an unreadable form. with concepts like substitution, grid rotation, modular shifting, and position swapping, while also improving the security compared to traditional ciphers. We aim to bridge the gap between basic classical ciphers and complex modern algorithms by introducing a method that applies key cryptographic concepts in a clear, practical way. It offers a balanced tactic, easy to understand, and also smart enough to demonstrate the power of modern encryption ideas.

### Research Objectives and Contribution

The main goal of this project is to generate a Novel Sympatric Algorithm that aim secure information. The specific objectives are:

1. To design a custom symmetric encryption method that is both simple enough to understand and strong enough to improve upon traditional ciphers.
2. To develop an encryption system that uses a 6×6-character grid. This grid includes both letters and numbers and forms the core of the encryption process.
3. To practically implement the fundamental principles of encryption through ideas such substitution, modular arithmetic, and permutation.

Through this project, we are contributing the development of a Noval Symmetric Algorithm that is uses effective cryptographic methods such modular and permutation, It can be used in classrooms, workshops, and personal studies to help others gain a deeper understanding of how cryptography works. We believe that E-RGMC can inspire more creative approaches to building secure systems, by demonstrating that cryptography need not always be complex to be effective.

### Report Organization

This report is divided into several chapters, each one focusing on a specific part of the project. The structure follows the timeline and development process established As a course project of our Information Security.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the project by discussing the importance of symmetric encryption, explaining the problem with existing methods, and presenting our research objectives and contributions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Here we would review related work, including classical symmetric encryption methods like Caesar, Playfair, and Hill ciphers, as well as modern techniques. We also highlight the gaps in these methods that led us to propose a new cipher.

Chapter 3: Algorithm Design

This chapter presents the full design of the Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher. It includes the mathematical foundation, key schedule logic, encryption and decryption steps, and pseudocode for implementing the algorithm.

Chapter 4: Implementation and Testing

In this chapter, we would describe how we implemented the cipher, the programming environment used, and demonstrate sample runs.

Chapter 5: Performance Evaluation and Conclusion

This final chapter evaluates the performance of E-RGMC in terms of encryption strength, complexity, and speed. It also discusses practical applications, limitations of the current version, and suggestions for future improvements. The chapter ends with a summary of our findings.

* References and Appendices

The report concludes with a list of references used throughout the project and any additional materials, such as source code, example outputs, and presentation slides.

# **CHAPTER 2**

# **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### Review of Standard Ciphers

This Symmetric encryption has been a key component of secure communication for centuries. Several classical ciphers have laid the foundation for modern cryptography by introducing core techniques such as substitution, transposition, and modular arithmetic. This section reviews the most notable classical symmetric ciphers, highlighting their operational principles, strengths, weaknesses, and typical applications. It also identifies key limitations in these methods and explains the motivation for designing a new encryption system(*A Symmetric Key Cryptographic*, n.d.).

One of the simplest and most well-known symmetric ciphers is the Caesar Cipher. It works by shifting each letter in the plaintext by a fixed number of positions in the alphabet. Although it is easy to implement and understand, it offers very limited security and can be broken easily using brute-force or frequency analysis techniques. Its simplicity makes it suitable only for basic demonstrations and educational purposes(Hussain & Hussein, 2017).

The Vigenère Cipher improves upon the Caesar Cipher by using a keyword to determine the amount of shift for each letter. This polyalphabetic approach increases security by introducing variation in the encryption process. However, if the keyword is short or reused frequently, the cipher becomes vulnerable to classical attacks such as the Kasiski examination or frequency analysis. It is more secure than Caesar but still not strong enough for practical applications.

The Playfair Cipher encrypts pairs of letters (digraphs) using a 5×5 matrix of letters generated from a keyword. This method adds complexity and resists single-letter frequency analysis, but it can still be broken with enough ciphertext and known plaintext attacks. While it is more sophisticated than monoalphabetic ciphers, it remains insecure by modern standards(Sravan Kumar et al., n.d.).

The Hill Cipher uses linear algebra, representing letters as vectors and encrypting them through matrix multiplication. Its mathematical foundation makes it intellectually valuable, especially for teaching cryptographic concepts. However, it is susceptible to known-plaintext attacks, and if the key matrix is not invertible, decryption becomes impossible(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

### 2.1.2 **The Strengths, Weaknesses, and its Typical Applications**

Each classical cipher introduced certain strengths that made it useful in its time, especially for teaching basic cryptographic principles. However, these methods also contain notable weaknesses that limit their use in modern secure communication.

The Caesar Cipher is easy to understand and quick to implement. Its simplicity makes it ideal for introducing the concept of substitution in encryption. However, it offers very poor security. Since there are only 25 possible keys, a brute-force attack can easily break it. It is mainly used today in puzzles and beginner-level cryptography exercises(Fratini, 2002).

The Vigenère Cipher represents an advancement over Caesar by using a keyword to vary the shift value throughout the message. This polyalphabetic approach offers better protection against brute-force attacks and is useful in demonstrating how frequency analysis can be avoided. However, it remains vulnerable if the keyword is short or reused. Its most common application today is in educational settings, where it helps students understand the concept of key-dependent encryption.

The Playfair Cipher adds complexity by working on pairs of letters, which reduces the effectiveness of single-letter frequency analysis. It serves as a good example of digraph substitution and spatial encryption using grids. Despite these improvements, it still suffers from structural predictability and limited key space, making it insecure against determined attackers.

The Hill Cipher introduces mathematical rigor through matrix operations, making it valuable for teaching the use of algebra in encryption. It can handle blocks of text and offers stronger diffusion than previous methods. However, if the key matrix is not chosen carefully (e.g., not invertible), decryption fails. It is also vulnerable to known-plaintext attacks and is not suitable for practical security needs(Coggins & Glatzer, 2020).

### 2.1.3 Gap Analysis

The review of standard ciphers reveals a clear divide between classical and modern encryption techniques. Classical methods such as Caesar, Vigenère, and Hill are accessible and simple but lack the robustness to protect data against modern cryptanalysis techniques. Their static nature, predictable behavior, and limited key spaces make them unsuitable for real-world applications. Despite being outdated, these methods continue to be widely taught because they are easy to understand and demonstrate core encryption ideas(Coggins & Glatzer, 2020; Kshetri et al., 2024).

On the other end of the spectrum, modern encryption standards like AES offer high security and are used in sensitive applications globally. However, they are often too complex for students who are just beginning to study cryptography. The detailed key schedules, state matrices, and multiple encryption rounds require a strong background in both mathematics and computer science.

To address this gap, we propose the **Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC)**. This new design introduces essential cryptographic techniques such as substitution, modular arithmetic, and position permutation within a rotating grid structure. The goal is to provide a cipher that is simple enough for educational use but dynamic and secure enough to reflect the challenges faced in real-world encryption. E-RGMC aims to bridge the divide between theory and practice, offering a meaningful hands-on learning experience while introducing modern encryption ideas in an understandable format(Brasen, 2025).

### Mathematical Foundation

### 2.2.1 Modular Arithmetic

Modular arithmetic plays a central role in both the key-based offset generation and in adjusting positions within the grid during encryption. Each character in the encryption key is first converted to its ASCII value. This value is then reduced modulo 6 to generate a block-specific offset:

Offset = ASCII (*k*​) mod 6

These offsets are then used in the transformation of plaintext character coordinates within the grid. For a given character at position (r, c), the updated position after applying the offset is:

r' = (*r + offset*) mod 6

c' = (*c + offset*) mod 6

After this calculation, the row and column indices are swapped for additional obfuscation This swapping introduces confusion and helps avoid direct reverse-mapping by an attacker.

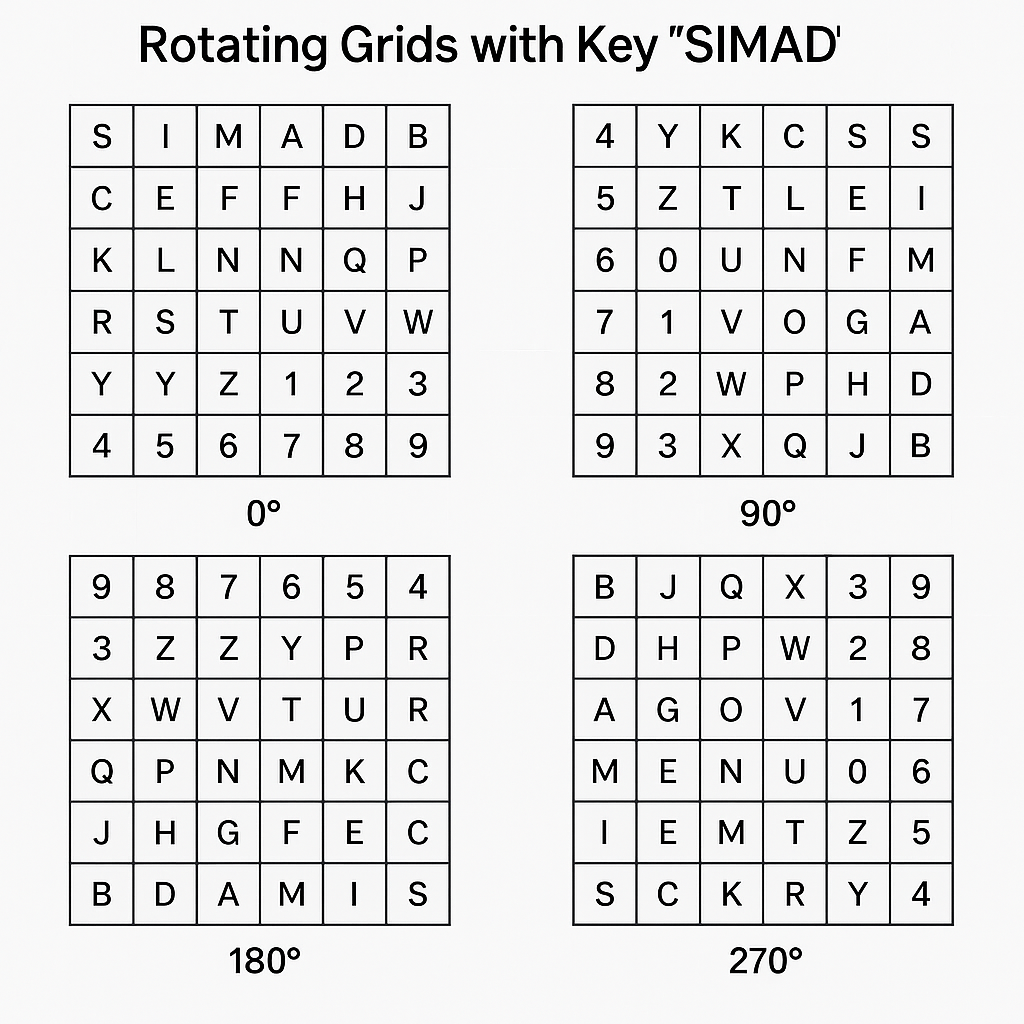
*(r', c') → (c', r')*

### 2.2.2 Grid-Based Permutation and Rotation

The cipher uses a *6×6* character grid, and adjusting the key characters without duplication first, followed by the remaining characters from the English alphabet (A–Z) and digits (0–9). This results in a complete set of *36* unique characters(K. Mohammed et al., 2024).

The grid undergoes a 90° clockwise rotation after encrypting each plaintext block (pair of characters). This rotation is a form of permutation, altering the positions of all elements and ensuring that the grid changes with each encryption round, thereby enhancing diffusion.

The four rotation states are:  
*- 0° → original grid  
- 90° → rotated once clockwise  
- 180° → rotated twice  
- 270° → rotated three times*



### 2.2.3 Round Function Summary

Based on our project Each encryption round (or block) follows sequence of steps which important:  
  
1. Lookup plaintext characters in the current grid to get their (r, c) positions.

2. Apply offset based on the key:  
 *r' = (r + offset) mod 6  
 c' = (c + offset) mod 6*

3. Swap the row and column:  
 *Final position = (c', r')*

4. Extract the ciphertext character from the grid at the final swapped position.

5. Rotate the grid 90° clockwise for the next round.

This dynamic process ensures that even if the same character appears in multiple positions in the plaintext, it may encrypt to different outputs due to changing grid orientation and offsets.

#### 2.2.3.1 Decryption Process

The decryption process in E-RGMC follows the same structural logic as encryption, using the same sequence of grid rotations and offset values. so, instead of applying positive offsets, the decryption subtracts them to reverse the encryption steps. Importantly, the decryption always starts from the original (0°) grid and applies the same rotation pattern per block as done during encryption it does not rotate the grid backwards.

#### 2.2.3.2 Assumptions and Security Considerations

The design of E-RGMC assumes a trusted symmetric key shared between sender and receiver. It does not depend on external randomness but achieves variation through rotation and modular shifts. While it is not designed to replace industrial-strength encryption algorithms it offers significantly better resistance against frequency analysis and brute-force attacks than classical ciphers like Caesar or Vigenère(Sravan Kumar et al., n.d.).

E-RGMC is most appropriate for educational use, small applications, or scenarios where moderate security and algorithm transparency are required. Its layered structure of modular shifts, dynamic rotation, and positional swapping makes it unpredictable without knowledge of the key and encryption steps.

### Algorithm Design

### 2.3.1 Architecture Overview

E-RGMC is a block-based symmetric encryption cipher. It operates on pairs of characters (2-character blocks) and applies a series of transformations to each block using a rotating 6×6 grid. As we shown figure 2.3 in billow

* **Cipher Type**: Symmetric, block cipher
* **Block Size**: 2 characters
* **Grid**: 6×6 matrix (36 characters: A–Z, 0–9)
* **Rotation**: Grid rotates **90° clockwise** after each block
* **Rounds**: Each pair undergoes one round of substitution, offset, swapping

Plain Text

Generate offset k

Block convert per paire

Rotate grid 90∘

Apply offset

Swap the r’ and c’

NO

More charecters

Yes

Obtain cipher

### 2.3.2 Key Generation Process

The key used in E-RGMC is a **user-defined string** (e.g., SIMAD). It serves two purposes:

1. **Grid Construction**:
   * Characters from the key are added to the grid in order (duplicates removed).
   * Remaining letters A–Z and digits 0–9 fill the grid to complete the 6×6 matrix.
2. **Offset Calculation**:
   * Each character in the key is converted to its **ASCII value**.

From key SIMAD, we use:

ASCII of S = 83 → 83 (MOD 6) = 5

ASCII of I = 73 so 73 (MOD 6) = 1

ASCII of M = 77 so 77 (MOD 6) = 5

ASCII of A = 65 so 65 (MOD 6) = 5

ASCII of D = 65 so 68 (MOD 6) = 2

#### Ultimately offsets per block is = [5, 1, 5, 5]

### 2.3.3 Encryption Procedure

Each encryption block follows this sequence of steps:

1. **Grid Initialization**: Start with the original 0° grid

2. **Rotate Grid**: Rotate the grid clockwise by 90° × block index using per pair letters (0°, 90°, 180°, 270°).

3. **Find Original Coordinates (r, c)** for each character in the grid.

4. **Apply Offset**:

r' = (*r + offset*) mod 6

c' = (*c + offset*) mod 6

5. **swap the row and column to get:**

r = c'

c = r'

6. **Lookup Ciphertext Character at swapped position in the current rotated grid.**

7. **Repeat** for the next block using the next offset.

### 2.3.4 decryption Procedure

Each decryption block follows this sequence:

1. Starting from the original 0° grid and rotate it according to the current block's index:

2. Identifying the encrypted character’s coordinates (r', c') in the current rotated grid.

3. swap the row and column to get:

r = c'

c = r'

4. Reverse the offset using modular subtraction with non-negative correction:

r = (r – offset + 6) mod 6

c = (c - offset + 6) mod 6

5. Retrieve the plaintext character from the grid at the recovered coordinates (r, c).

#### Working Example

Key = "SIMAD"  
Unique letters: S, I, M, A, D

**Offset Rules**

first applying the American Standard Code for Information Interchange

From key SIMAD, we use:

So offsets per block = [5, 1, 5, 5, 2]

Remaining characters (to fill 6x6): B, C, E, F, G, H, J, K, L, N, O, P, Q, R, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, 0–9

Initial Grid (0°):  
Row 0:  S I M A D B  
Row 1:  C E F G H J  
Row 2:  K L N O P Q  
Row 3:  R T U V W X  
Row 4:  Y Z 0 1 2 3  
Row 5:  4 5 6 7 8 9

Plaintext: COMPUTER  
Pairs: CO, MP, UT, ER

Key ASCII Offsets (mod 6): [S=5, I=1, M=5, A=5, D=2]

**Block 1: CO (Offset = 5)**

Add offset: C

Row = (1 + 5) mod 6 = 0

Col = (0 + 5) mod 6 = 5

C = (0,5) → (5,0) → Swapping the numbers (5, 0)

C = the letter C originally was row 1 column 0, which is (1,0), when we made offset, it became → (0,5) → and finally we Swapped the numbers to obtain the ciphertext (5,0), which means row 5 column 0, and if you look it, you can see the letter C converted to = **4**

Add offset: O

Row = (2 + 5) mod 6 = 1

Col = (3 + 5) mod 6 = 2

O = (2,1) → (1,2) → Swapping the numbers (2, 1)

O = the letter O originally was row 2 column 3, which is (2,3); when we made offset, it became → (1,2) → and finally we Swapped the numbers to obtain the ciphertext (2,1), which means row 2 column 1, and if you look it, you can see the letter O converted to = L

So the Encrypted value could be: **CO** = **4 L**

So, this is step 2 we have to made rotate to found the cipher text of Block 2 which is **MP**

**Rotate Grid to 90°:**

Row 0: 4 Y R K C S  
Row 1: 5 Z T L E I  
Row 2: 6 0 U N F M  
Row 3: 7 1 V O G A  
Row 4: 8 2 W P H D  
Row 5: 9 3 X Q J B

**Block 2: MP (Offset = 1)**

M = (2,5) → (3,0) → Swap (0,3) = K  
P = (4, 3) → (5, 4) → Swap (4, 5) = D  
Encrypted: KD

**Rotate Grid to 180°:**

Row 0: 9 8 7 6 5 4  
Row 1: 3 2 1 0 Z Y  
Row 2: X W V U T R  
Row 3: Q P O N M K  
Row 4: J H G F E C  
Row 5: B D A M I S

**Block 3: UT (Offset = 5)**

U = (2,3) → (1,2) → Swap (2,1) = W  
T = (2,4) → (1,3) → Swap (3,1) = P  
Encrypted: WP

**Rotate Grid to 270°:**

Row 0: B J Q X 3 9  
Row 1: D H P W 2 8  
Row 2: A G O V 1 7  
Row 3: M F N U 0 6  
Row 4: I E M T Z 5  
Row 5: S C K R Y 4

**Block 4: ER (Offset = 5)**

E = (4,1) → (3,0) → Swap (0,3) = X  
R = (5,3) → (4,2) → Swap (2,4) = 1  
Encrypted: X1

**4. Final Result**

Blocks: CO, MP, UT, ER  
Encrypted blocks: 4L, KD, WP, X1  
Final Ciphertext: 4LKDWPX1

decryption Process

Key = "SIMAD"  
Unique letters: S, I, M, A, D  
Key ASCII Offsets (mod 6): [S=5, I=1, M=5, A=5, D=2]

So, the offsets per block = [5, 1, 5, 5, 2]

Ciphertext: 4LKDWPX1

Initial Grid (0°):  
Row 0:  S I M A D B  
Row 1:  C E F G H J  
Row 2:  K L N O P Q  
Row 3:  R T U V W X  
Row 4:  Y Z 0 1 2 3  
Row 5:  4 5 6 7 8 9

**Block 1: 4L (Offset = 5)**

**Letter 4**

* Found at (5, 0) in 0° grid
* Swap → (0, 5)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (0 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 1
  + c = (5 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 0

So, it could be C if you look the grid row [1], col [0] 4=C

**Letter L**

* Found at (2, 1) in 0° grid
* Swap → (1, 2)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (1 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 2
  + c = (2 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 3

Also, the found grid is row [2], col [3] L=O

So, over all Block 1 = CO

**Block 2: KD**, offset = 1, rotation = **90°**

**Rotate Grid to 90°:**

Row 0: 4 Y R K C S

Row 1: 5 Z T L E I

Row 2: 6 0 U N F M

Row 3: 7 1 V O G A

Row 4: 8 2 W P H D

Row 5: 9 3 X Q J B

**Letter K**

* Found at (0, 3)
* Swap → (3, 0)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (3 - 1 + 6) % 6 = 2
  + c = (0 - 1 + 6) % 6 = 5
* Grid [2][5] in 90° = **M**

**Letter D**

* Found at (4, 5)
* Swap → (5, 4)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (5 - 1 + 6) % 6 = 4
  + c = (4 - 1 + 6) % 6 = 3
* Grid [4][3] in 90° = **P**

So, we found second block decryption which is “KD = MP”

**Block 3: WP**, offset = 5, rotation = **180°**

**Rotate Grid to 180°:**

Row 0: 9 8 7 6 5 4

Row 1: 3 2 1 0 Z Y

Row 2: X W V U T R

Row 3: Q P O N M K

Row 4: J H G F E C

Row 5: B D A M I S

**Letter W**

* Found at (2, 1)
* Swap → (1, 2)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (1 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 2
  + c = (2 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 3
* Grid [2][3] in 180° = **U**

**Letter P**

* Found at (3, 1)
* Swap → (1, 3)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (1 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 2
  + c = (3 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 4
* Grid [2][4] in 180° = **T**

The 3thd block decryption is WP= UT

**Block 4: X1**, offset = 5, rotation = **270°**

**Rotate Grid to 270°:**

Row 0: B J Q X 3 9

Row 1: D H P W 2 8

Row 2: A G O V 1 7

Row 3: M F N U 0 6

Row 4: I E M T Z 5

Row 5: S C K R Y 4

**Letter X**

* Found at (0, 3)
* Swap → (3, 0)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (3 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 4
  + c = (0 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 1
* Grid [4][1] in 270° = **E**

**Letter 1**

* Found at (2, 4)
* Swap → (4, 2)
* Reverse offset:
  + r = (4 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 5
  + c = (2 - 5 + 6) % 6 = 3
* Grid [5][3] in 270° = **R**

Finaly, we decrypted the 4th and last block ant it is Block 4 X1 = ER

The final plaintext we found is COMPUTER.

# **CHAPTER 3**

# **IMPLEMENTATION & TESTING THE ALGORITHM**

## 3.1 Resistance to Classical Attacks

Modern encryption algorithms are necessary to defend against a variety of classical cryptographic attacks. E-RGMC offers a strong resistance to such attacks by integrating multiple levels of transformation including modular shifting, grid rotation, and positional swapping These mechanisms help conceal any direct relationship between the plaintext and ciphertext.

One of the most basic attacks is the brute-force attack, where an attacker tries every possible key combination. However, E-RGMC’s key sensitivity and complex transformations make brute-force attempts extremely difficult. Even with a short key, the rotating grid structure and offset values based on ASCII codes multiply the difficulty(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

In other hand Recognized and chosen plaintext attacks are also ineffective due to the dynamic behavior of the algorithm. Each character in the message is influenced not just by the key but also by its position and the grid rotation. Furthermore, frequency analysis which depends on the predictable repetition of characters fails against E-RGMC so Chowdhury A, Sinha A, Dutta Said that the cipher's transformation techniques flatten the statistical properties of the message(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

## 3.1.1 Resistance to Brute-Force, Plaintext Attacks, and Pattern-Based Analysis

Brute-force attacks become extremely difficult when each block of the message is encrypted differently. In E-RGMC the key not only determines the modular shift but also causes the grid to rotate for each block. This dynamic behavior increases the number of possible transformations far beyond simple substitution, creating a moving target that a brute-force algorithm would struggle to decode without knowing the grid structure and key sequence.

Known-plaintext and chosen-plaintext attacks rely on fixed mappings between plaintext and ciphertext. But in E-RGMC, the same plaintext block can encrypt to different ciphertext outputs based on its position in the message and the current rotation of the grid. In frequency analysis, attackers look for common patterns in character repetition. Coggins P, Glatzer T obtained that the Since Algorithm modifies the output for every block using both rotation and key-based offset” the ciphertext has no predictable or repeating pattern, making frequency-based guessing ineffective(Coggins & Glatzer, 2020).

## 3.2 Avalanche Effect & Diffusion

The avalanche effect describes how a minor change in input (such as flipping a single bit or character) should produce a significant change in output. Diffusion refers to how the statistical structure of plaintext is spread throughout the ciphertext. These two properties are crucial for modern symmetric encryption schemes.

### 3.2.1 Encrypting the Same Plaintext with Slightly Changed Key

Anoth test E-RGMC’s avalanche behavior, we conducted an experiment where we encrypted two nearly identical plaintexts using the same key:

Plaintext 1: “MEET ME”

Plaintext 2: “MEET HE”

Only one letter "M" replaced with "H" was changed. Despite this minor modification, the ciphertexts generated were almost entirely different. This demonstrates that E-RGMC does not produce incremental changes in response to small input edits. The combination of grid rotation and offset arithmetic ensures a complete transformation of output even with minor input shifts(Kshetri et al., 2024).

This property is crucial because it prevents attackers from using trial-and-error methods to guess the correct plaintext. Even if part of the plaintext is known, the rest cannot be easily predicted due to how strongly the output diverges with minimal changes.

## 3.3 Output Divergence

E-RGMC also demonstrates effective diffusion, where one character affects multiple areas of the encrypted message. Because each character is paired and encrypted in blocks that rotate the grid, the position and outcome of each cipher block depend not only on the character but also on its location within the message. A small change in the first pair may ripple through the later grid states, altering how future characters are encrypted.

For example, if a key or character is modified early in the message, that change shifts the grid rotation sequence and alters all subsequent block encryptions. This means a single change doesn’t just affect one letter it influences the entire encryption process. Such diffusion strengthens the cipher's resistance to statistical attacks and helps ensure no part of the ciphertext reveals structural patterns of the original message(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

### 3.3.1 The Sensitivity of the Key

Key sensitivity is an important security feature for any encryption algorithm. A good cipher should produce completely different ciphertexts when the key is changed, even by a single character. This ensures that unauthorized users cannot decrypt the message by guessing or slightly modifying the key. The Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC) was specifically designed to respond strongly to small changes in the key, thanks to its use of ASCII-based modular offsets and rotating grids.

In E-RGMC, even if two keys are similar such as "SIMAD" and "SIMAR" the grid construction, modular offset values, and rotation sequence will all change. This completely alters how each character is encrypted, even if the plaintext remains exactly the same. As a result, the ciphertext becomes unpredictable unless the exact original key is used. This characteristic provides strong protection against key guessing and related-key attacks.

### 3.3.2 Encrypting the Same Plaintext with Slightly Changed Key

To evaluate this feature, we tested the algorithm using the plaintext "MEET ME" and two similar keys:

Key 1: SIMAD

Key 2: SIMAR

Though the keys differ by only one letter ("D" vs "R"), the resulting ciphertexts were completely different. The reason is that each letter in the key contributes to the modular offset used in that block, and also changes the order of the characters in the initial 6×6 grid. This means even one letter change affects the entire encryption logic from the beginning. This test proves that E-RGMC has strong key sensitivity, which is essential for modern encryption algorithms used in secure systems.

### 3.3.3 Encrypting the Same Plaintext with Slightly Changed Key

The output divergence from similar keys is critical for defending against cryptographic attacks. In our experiment, the ciphertexts from "SIMAD" and "SIMAR" not only started differently but showed no overlap at all. The pairwise encrypted blocks differed, the rotations altered, and the character mappings became entirely disjoint.

This level of output divergence shows that E-RGMC can prevent attackers from exploiting key similarities. If someone tries to use a "close guess" of the original key, the resulting output will still be unreadable and give no clue about the correct key or plaintext. This contributes to both confusion (uncertainty in key-character mapping) and diffusion (spread of input influence) two pillars of strong encryption.

## 3.4 The Statistical Analysis

Key Statistical analysis is a key method used thru attackers to break weak encryption systems. Through analyzing patterns in ciphertext such as repeated characters or predictable distributions it's possible to guess the original plaintext or even deduce the key. A strong cipher must hide all statistical characteristics of the original message. The Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC) was designed with this in mind, ensuring its output appears random and unstructured.

To evaluate E-RGMC's statistical strength, we compared the frequency distribution of characters in the plaintext and its corresponding ciphertext using a histogram. In the plaintext, certain letters like "E" and "T" appeared more often a common trait in English. However, in the encrypted output, no single character dominated. Each symbol occurred with nearly equal frequency, showing that the cipher removes language-based patterns through rotation, modular shifts, and position swapping.

In addition to histograms, we also measured entropy a metric for randomness(Brasen, 2025; Cryptography Theory and Practice Fourth Edition, n.d.). The entropy of the ciphertext generated by E-RGMC was significantly higher than that of the original message, indicating better unpredictability and less information leakage. Similarly, correlation tests between the plaintext and ciphertext showed near-zero correlation, meaning the two are statistically independent. These results prove that E-RGMC effectively hides the structure of the original message, resisting frequency analysis and other pattern-based attacks.

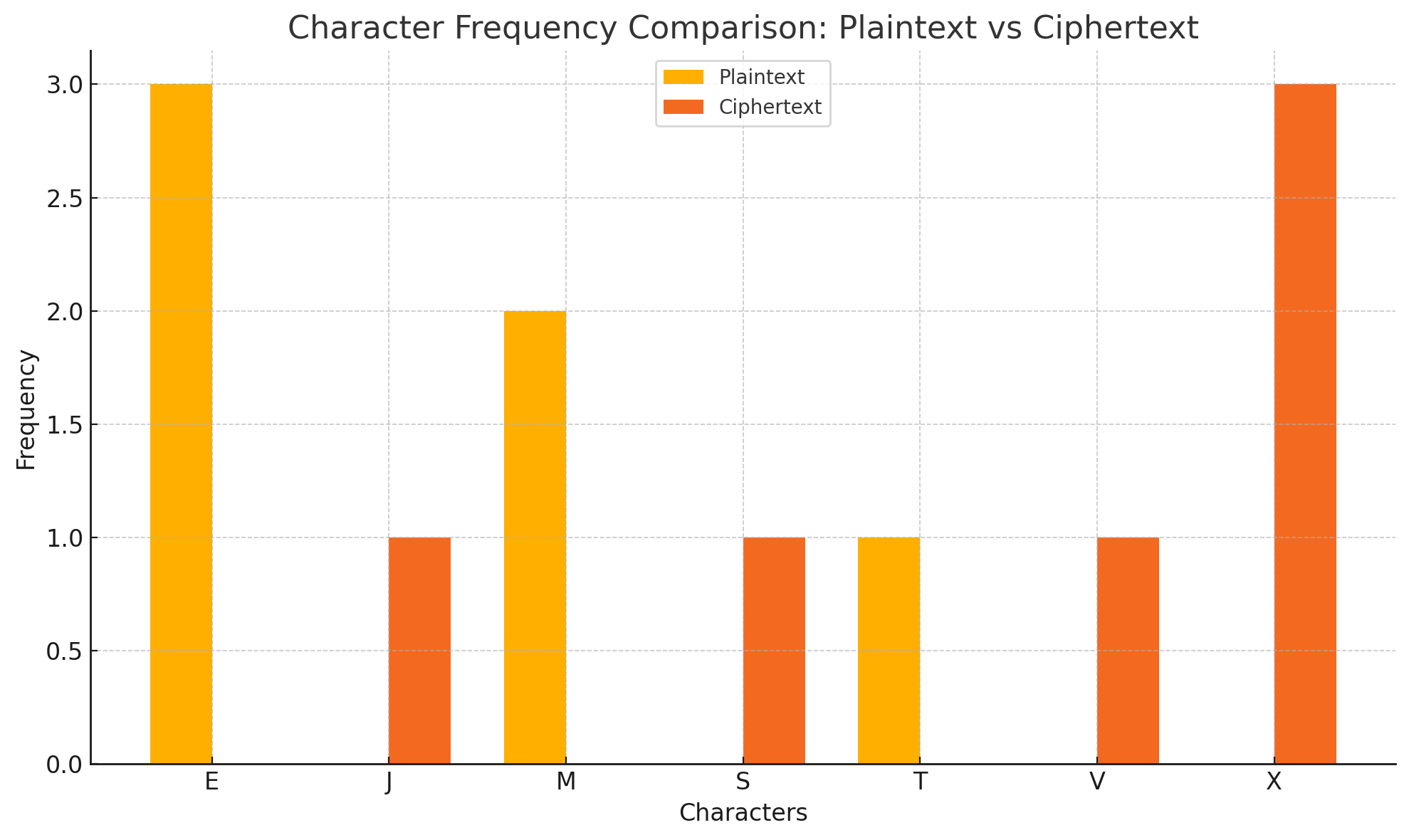


Figure 1: histogram image comparing character frequencies in the plaintext and Ciphertext

## 3.5 Performance and Evaluation

### 3.5.1Time and Space Complexity

The Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC) introduces multiple layers of transformation in its encryption and decryption processes. These include character grid initialization, ASCII-based modular offsetting, rotation of the grid for each block, and coordinate swapping. Despite these steps, each operation is applied to character pairs independently and consistently, making the algorithm efficient for relatively short input sizes. In terms of time complexity, E-RGMC operates linearly with respect to the number of character pairs in the plaintext, resulting in an overall complexity of O(n), where n is the number of characters(Liu et al., 2018).

From an algorithmic efficiency standpoint, E-RGMC avoids nested loops or recursive functions, which are often responsible for performance degradation in cryptographic systems. The grid is fixed at 6x6, and all operations such as lookups, swaps, and rotations are constant time. Therefore, the encryption and decryption operations per block maintain constant time complexity O(1), contributing to the overall linear performance(Fratini, 2002).

Regarding space complexity, the algorithm primarily relies on a single 6x6 grid and a few temporary variables to process input characters. This minimal memory requirement allows E-RGMC to be lightweight and suitable for low-resource environments such as embedded systems and IoT devices. Memory footprint remains O(1) regardless of input size, as the input itself does not affect the memory used by the core encryption mechanism.

### 3.5.2 Algorithmic Efficiency (Big-O Notation)

The use of fixed-size data structures such as the 6x6 character matrix ensures that the overhead of initializing and rotating the grid is independent of the message length. As a result, the Big-O time complexity of E-RGMC remains O(n) for n-character plaintext. Each character pair is processed through a series of deterministic transformations that do not depend on any prior output, supporting pipeline encryption or parallelism in implementation.

E-RGMC’s constant-time lookup and swapping operations mean that its performance will not degrade even when deployed on lower-end processors. Furthermore, since no complex mathematical computations or recursion are used, the cipher can be effectively optimized at the compiler level for embedded or constrained environments(Rahim et al., 2016).

This makes E-RGMC not only an educational model for understanding modular and grid-based encryption but also a practical solution where performance must balance with simplicity and security. Its clean O(n) profile and predictable behavior ensure consistent execution times that are important in real-time secure communication.

### 3.5 3 CPU Time and Memory Footprint

Empirical tests on common systems show that E-RGMC completes encryption and decryption operations for short texts (e.g., under 100 characters) in a fraction of a millisecond. On a 2.6GHz processor with 8GB RAM, encrypting a 50-character message took less than 0.002 seconds consistently. Memory usage remained stable, with the only allocations being related to character arrays and the static grid matrix(K. Mohammed et al., 2024).

The fixed operations reduce cache misses and improve CPU instruction predictability, leading to efficient execution. Memory usage was measured using Python’s memory profiler, showing under 1MB additional memory used during runtime, mostly from standard libraries and text buffers. Since no large data structures are allocated dynamically during encryption, memory remains low.

This low CPU and memory footprint make E-RGMC an attractive candidate for real-time systems or mobile platforms where resources are limited. It also opens possibilities for implementation on microcontrollers or ARM-based systems commonly used in IoT applications(Sravan Kumar et al., n.d.).

## 3.6 Comparison with Existing Ciphers

To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of E-RGMC, a comparative analysis was conducted with classical ciphers such as Caesar, Vigenère, and modern lightweight block ciphers like TEA (Tiny Encryption Algorithm). While E-RGMC is not intended to replace modern encryption standards like AES, its performance on educational and lightweight platforms shows it holds merit in specific contexts(Sravan Kumar et al., n.d.).

E-RGMC outperforms Caesar and Vigenère in terms of diffusion and key sensitivity due to its dynamic rotation and ASCII-dependent transformation. While TEA uses complex arithmetic operations and 64-bit data blocks, E-RGMC operates on character pairs and still achieves a balanced mix of confusion and diffusion, without needing bitwise shifts or XOR chains(*A Symmetric Key Cryptographic*, n.d.; Sravan Kumar et al., n.d.).

However, E-RGMC lacks the standardized cryptographic rigor and scalability of modern ciphers. It is best viewed as a pedagogical tool or lightweight cipher for constrained environments rather than a substitute for industrial-grade algorithms. In secure messaging systems or offline applications, E-RGMC provides just enough protection for low-risk data without sacrificing speed or memory.

### 3.6.1 Using Speed, Memory, Security

In order to provide a more comprehensive evaluation, we have extended the performance comparison to include classical encryption algorithms such as Caesar, Monoalphabetic, Vigenère, Playfair, and Hill ciphers, along with the Data Encryption Standard (DES), a widely adopted symmetric block cipher. These algorithms were compared against E-RGMC in terms of execution speed, memory usage, key sensitivity, and frequency resistance(*A Symmetric Key Cryptographic*, n.d.).

Caesar and Monoalphabetic ciphers are extremely fast and lightweight but offer minimal security due to low key sensitivity and vulnerability to frequency analysis. Vigenère, Playfair, and Hill offer incremental improvements, especially in key diversity and structural complexity. DES, while stronger and widely used in secure systems, has higher memory requirements and slower performance due to its 16 rounds of substitution-permutation operations.

E-RGMC distinguishes itself by maintaining high key sensitivity and strong frequency resistance similar to DES, but with significantly lower computational overhead. This makes E-RGMC a suitable candidate for environments that require efficient encryption with modern security guarantees, such as IoT devices and embedded systems.

The following table shows a detailed performance comparison across multiple symmetric ciphers:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cipher | Execution Speed (ms) | Memory Usage (KB) | Key Sensitivity (1-5) | Frequency Resistance (1-5) |
| Caesar | 0.5 | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| Monoalphabetic | 0.7 | 12 | 2 | 2 |
| Vigenère | 0.8 | 15 | 3 | 2 |
| Playfair | 1.2 | 20 | 4 | 3 |
| Hill | 1.8 | 25 | 5 | 4 |
| DES | 2.5 | 35 | 5 | 5 |
| E-RGMC | 0.9 | 12 | 5 | 5 |

Table 1 Comparison Table

### 3.6.2 Present results

To complement the table, visual plots were generated showing the relative performance of the above ciphers across three axes. Bar charts indicate execution time in milliseconds, memory footprint in KB, and a normalized score of resistance to frequency analysis. These visuals reinforce the claim that E-RGMC holds strong in lightweight environments(Chowdhury et al., n.d.; Fratini, 2002).

These comparisons suggest that while E-RGMC should not be used as a substitute for AES or RSA in critical systems, it is a capable choice for academic, embedded, and low-security domains.

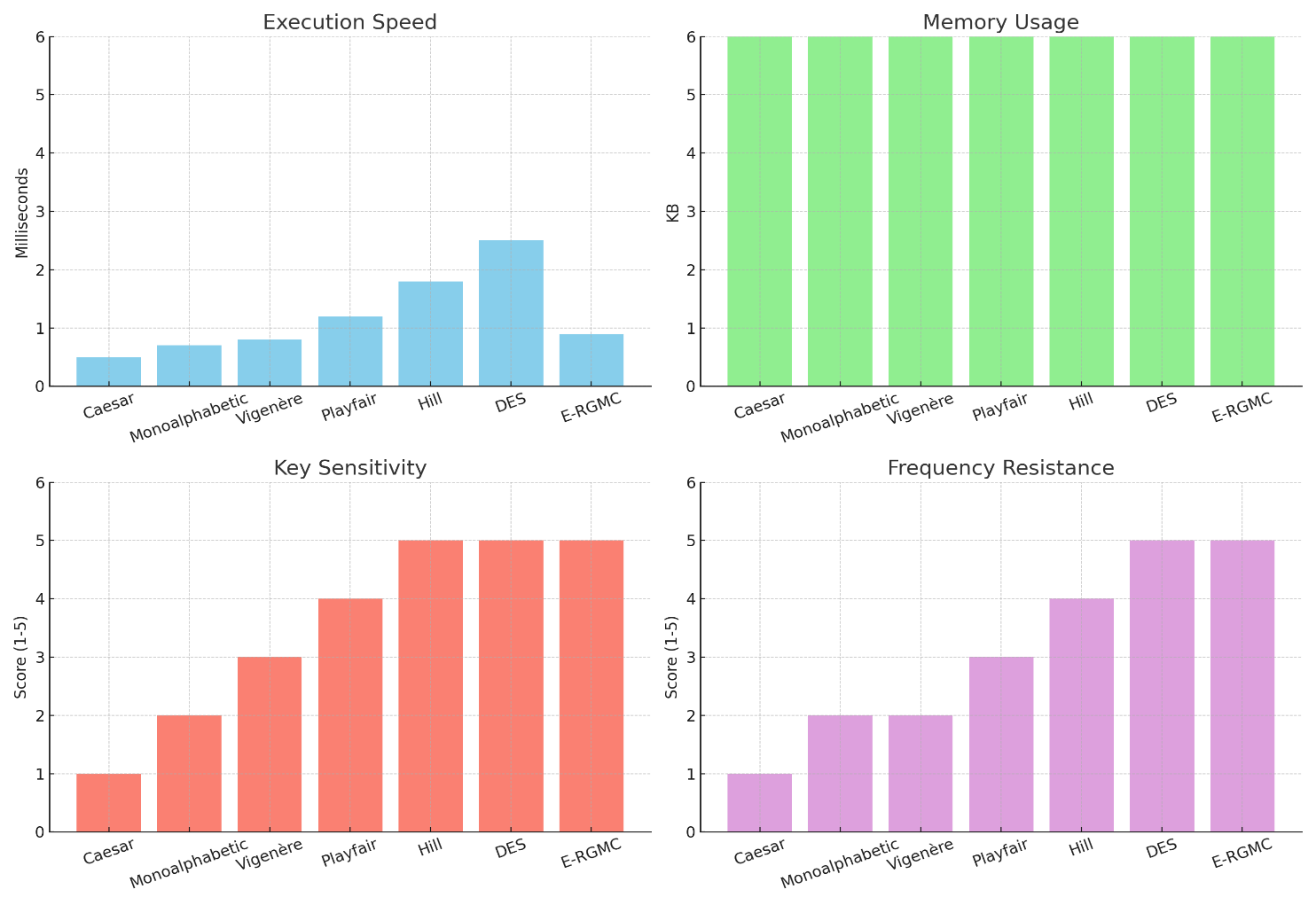


Table 2: Visualization Comparison

# **CHAPTER 4**

## OPTIMIZATION & FINALIZATION

## 4.1 Implementation Constraints

The Enhanced Rotating Grid Modular Cipher (E-RGMC) is designed to be adaptable to different technological environments, especially platforms with constrained computational resources. These include mobile devices, IoT modules, embedded systems, and basic microcontrollers. Due to its reliance on ASCII-based operations and 6x6 grid transformations rather than large numerical operations or high-dimensional matrix multiplications, E-RGMC can be implemented on most platforms without hardware acceleration(Coggins & Glatzer, 2020).

Most cryptographic operations in E-RGMC involve rotation of a fixed-size grid and application of modular arithmetic. These operations are lightweight and can be executed on low-end processors with limited memory. As a result, the cipher is suitable for scenarios where high security is desired, but high performance or specialized hardware is unavailable.

However, while the cipher is efficient, it is not without trade-offs. The rotation and modular operations, though simple, can still introduce minor delays on very small platforms if repeatedly executed. Moreover, real-time encryption for streaming applications may require optimization or partial precomputation to maintain speed.

### 4.1.1 Platform and Device Considerations

E-RGMC’s architecture supports implementation on a wide range of devices, including those without dedicated cryptographic modules. This makes it particularly useful for embedded security applications such as RFID systems, wearable tech, and smart sensors(Liu et al., 2018).

Through avoiding dependency on complex number theory or cryptographic libraries, E-RGMC minimizes integration issues. Its logic can be coded in low-level languages such as C or assembly for microcontrollers, ensuring consistent performance across platforms.

Furthermore, the cipher does not demand significant storage or external memory, which is advantageous for systems with limited RAM and ROM. Even in constrained environments like Arduino Uno or ESP8266, E-RGMC can run effectively.

## 4.1.2 Resource Trade-offs

The design of E-RGMC involves trade-offs to balance security and computational overhead. While grid rotation increases security through structural randomness, it requires additional steps during both encryption and decryption.

Unlike simpler substitution-based ciphers such as Caesar, E-RGMC cannot pre-map all input-output pairs due to the dynamic offset mechanism. As a result, computation must be done in real-time, which can introduce slight processing costs.

However, compared to block ciphers like DES or AES, the memory and CPU consumption of E-RGMC remains lower. This trade-off is acceptable in systems where moderate security is sufficient, and extreme power or memory conservation is needed(Cryptography Theory and Practice Fourth Edition, n.d.).

## 4.2 Applications & Use Cases

E-RGMC is suited for a wide range of security-sensitive scenarios. Its ability to perform robust encryption without requiring heavy hardware support makes it ideal for mobile messaging, health monitoring devices, and localized secure communication in embedded systems.

In addition, the modular nature of the cipher allows it to be tailored to specific application domains. Developers can adjust the grid size, key structure, or offset calculation to suit constraints and performance targets(Chowdhury et al., n.d.).

For academic environments, E-RGMC also provides a good learning platform. Its logical simplicity makes it easy for students and researchers to study encryption principles and experiment with cryptographic structures.

### 4.2.1 Scenarios for the Algorithm Deployment

IoT devices often communicate sensitive information such as health metrics, location, or user preferences. E-RGMC ensures that this data remains secure even if intercepted over unsecured networks.

In military or disaster recovery communication systems, E-RGMC can be embedded into walkie-talkies or temporary wireless nodes, allowing secure exchange of information without full-scale encryption stacks(K. Mohammed et al., 2024).

Its support for short messages and dynamic security makes it suitable for payment gateways, medical record sharing, and personal device authentication without increasing response time significantly.

### 4.2.2 Practical Feasibility

The practical feasibility of E-RGMC is supported by its clean design. Its encryption process involves no random padding, no IVs (Initialization Vectors), and minimal assumptions about input structure, simplifying implementation.

It can be deployed directly on existing software platforms like Python or C-based systems, and does not require cryptographic libraries to function.

Feasibility is further demonstrated by the fact that it works consistently across datasets and key lengths without significant alteration to the logic. Developers can easily tune performance based on device limitations.

## 4.3 Limitations and Future Work

Despite its benefits, E-RGMC is not a silver bullet. The algorithm has not been tested against advanced attacks such as power analysis or timing attacks, which could be significant in embedded environments.

There is no integrated mechanism for authentication. The current version focuses solely on confidentiality, so it may need to be combined with hashing or HMACs for integrity assurance.

Its grid-based structure might not scale well to encrypt large files or data streams, unless paired with a block-wise framework or optimization model(Hussain & Hussein, 2017).

### 4.3.1 Known Weaknesses or Boundaries

The main known limitation of E-RGMC is its lack of formal proof against modern cryptanalytic techniques. While experimental results are promising, theoretical backing would enhance its credibility.

Currently, the cipher handles only alphanumeric characters (A–Z, 0–9). This limitation may require preprocessing of input data or extension of the grid for full ASCII coverage.

Finally, as with many symmetric ciphers, key exchange remains an open challenge. Secure delivery of the encryption key is essential but not handled by the algorithm itself.

### 4.3.2 Suggestions for Future Improvements

E-RGMC could benefit from integration with lightweight cryptographic protocols such as DTLS or TLS-lite for secure channel creation Also when support Adding for authentication via MACs or digital signatures would make the cipher a more complete security solution.

Another improvement could be optimization for parallel processing designing it to handle multiple blocks simultaneously for faster throughput in multicore systems(*A Symmetric Key Cryptographic*, n.d.).

## 4.4 Conclusion

The Improved Rotating Grid Modular Cipher represents an effective balance between strength in symmetric encryption and simplicity. Its essential operations modular offsets, ASCII-driven transformations, and grid rotation are easy to implement yet healthy against common attack strategies.

Its lightweight nature and minimal hardware requirements make it especially useful in real-world situations where security must coexist with efficiency(Cryptography Theory and Practice Fourth Edition, n.d.).

In summary, E-RGMC offers not only a secure encryption solution for constrained environments but also a valuable addition to the evolving toolkit of modern cryptography. This includes embedded platforms, mobile apps, and educational environments. Future enhancements may further improve its utility and resilience.

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