

BRICS Expansion and Implication on Emerging International Relations

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The article primarily talks about BRICS's role in emerging international relations. It explores how the BRICS expansion is taking place. The research article expounds on the impact of the BRICS expansion on global politics. Further, the article explores the BRICS's strength in terms of global trade, economy, and geopolitics due to the inclusion of the various other countries in the BRICS. Finally, the article explains the feasibility of the de-dollarization of the global economy and the BRICS role in this process. However, the article concluded with a note that the de-dollarization is not that easy due to the internal conflicts of the BRICS countries.

Introduction

The leaders of the key rising market nations from several continents were linked by the BRIC group, which consists of Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The BRIC group held its first summit in Russia in 2009. Their leaders pledged to create an open and democratic economic system and to aid the work of the International financial institutions to be reformed by the Group of Twenty (G20) to spur growth. In order to further advance intra-group cooperation for emerging markets and emerging nations, initiated as a forum for discussion and policy cooperation, BRICS has developed into a transregional governance framework with South Africa joining in 2010, with political, security, economic, and social goals that are all-encompassing. The BRIC nations—Brazil, Russia, India, and China—are growing quickly, and many analysts predict that these nations will have the world's most powerful economy in the ensuing decades. In 2001, when the term "BRIC" was first used by economist Jim O'Neill, those nations produced 8% of the world's GDP. He anticipated that by 2011, this would rise to 14%. According to Liu and Li (2012), the BRICs made up nearly 20% of global GDP in 2012. The BRICs are considered as being at the vanguard of a significant change in

global power away from North America and western Europe, according to Fareed Zakaria and others. According to logic, academic influence will increase in tandem with political and economic growth. These four nations' higher education systems have experienced tremendous growth and are expected to continue growing and progressing throughout the ensuing decades. However, there is no guarantee that the BRICs will acquire the academic importance that is probably present in the political or economic arenas. Each has substantial obstacles to overcome.

Based on geographic proximity and shared interests or challenges to tackle, several international and regional organizations are developed or launched in various parts of the world in today's global politics. All states—developed, developing, or least developed—have arrived, must comprehend the significance of showcasing their glaring commonalities to form regional partnerships and similar objectives with other countries. When these connections spread from one area to independent nations from various regions joined forces to communicate and collaborate with one another. Inter-regionalism is a novel category of larger association that they jointly established.

Due to globalization or the lack of vocal opposition from some, numerous types of regional organizations emerge. Additionally, coalitions in contemporary international politics are vital for supporting one's overseas interests. Furthermore, in modern international politics, coalitions are essential for bolstering one foreign policy and fighting any governments that go against the interests of other nations. National security was one of every state's most vital national interests during the Cold War.

BRICS has grown into a significant sub-regional international organization, and its member countries are actively seeking to widen their networks of partners and collaboration. BRICS has attracted a tremendous amount of attention as a direct result of the 14th Summit of the BRICS, which China effectively hosted, and the choices made by the member countries to expand BRICS in international politics. The conflict in Ukraine has an impact on world politics and has resulted in both NATO and the European Union having proposed expansions (Katoch 2022). The result is the BRICS' policy of expansion, which might be seen as a response to the western blocs' by increasing the size of their blocs and their efforts to integrate with their European and Asian partners. The BRICS alliance's three most powerful nations, China, India, and Russia, encounter enormous obstacles in both domestic and foreign relations. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, territorial issues in the South China Sea,

the Indo-Pacific region's problems, and China's one-nation policies are among the issues now affecting world politics.

In contrast, India and China have been involved in a protracted dispute over their shared border for a significant amount of time. A fascinating and interesting research topic in international politics is the rivalry between the two countries and the inconsistency of their policies in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Indo-Pacific region. But Russia serves as the link that brings China and India together. Because the operation of the organization depends on the relationships between the three most powerful states, the future of BRICS is unpredictable, and it is interesting to watch how they will expand members and what method.

Several countries from the Middle East, Latin America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia have also indicated an interest in joining BRICS; however, the collaboration of the existing members is crucial for the integration of new members into the organization.

This paper examines the historical background, BRICS expansion policy from Fourteenth Summit and how the outreach and conference fostered the idea and steps of growth in its inception. In addition it examines the theoretical underpinning and its large scale implications on International Relations as the subject of this study.

Background

Many BRICS member states consider the group as a method to increase their influence globally and regard it as a reform to the conventional Western-led existing global order. However, many of the countries disagree on key issues like transparency and a fair strategy, which could impede the group's expansion.

The BRICS convention serves as the yearly gathering of the informal group of countries, when members and heads of state work to advance international economic cooperation. A member country's head of state rotates as the group's chairman once a year. Although the organization has been meeting informally since 2006, its first official gathering took place in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on June 16, 2009. According to BRICS, over 40 countries want to join the organization because of the nations' strong economies and desire to somewhat affect ties with the West. At their summit in 2023, the BRICs made an announcement inviting more nations to join the organization. On January 1, 2024, Argentina, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates will all be given full membership.

Some other key developments:

1. Establishing the New Development Bank. The organization was founded in 2015 to provide finance for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in developing and emerging economies.
2. The creation of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, a forum whose goal is to ‘strengthen and promote contacts at the leadership level of chambers, committees, and groups of parliamentarians.’ This group oversees creating innovative methods for inter-parliamentary collaboration as well as inter-parliamentary dialogues and exchanges.

The founding of BRICS can be attributed to Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs; after naming the first four of these important rising economies BRIC in 2001, their combined growth soared. It also emphasized the development of emerging economic powers like Brazil, Russia, China, and India. The founding of BRICS began in Cancun, Mexico, at the September 2003 saw the Doha Round. The US and the EU had jointly scheduled a meeting two weeks prior to develop a draft proposal for negotiations that they intended to submit to the World Trade Organization. However, the developing economies of the Doha Round, including Brazil, India, and South Africa, rejected this proposal. On the other hand, the BRICS interregional organization's foundation might be traced back to the first summit of the BRIC leaders, which included Brazil, Russia, India, and China. During the G8 Outreach Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, in July 2006, it was able to observe how BRICS simultaneously developed. The first BRIC is back after a lengthy break. September 2006 saw the Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New York City, which was conducted in conjunction with the General Discussion of UN Assembly. In addition, several important seminars preceded the first BRIC summit, which took place in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on June 16, 2009, and BRIC became a crucial organization internationally. Since the organization's foundation in 2009, analysts believe that its establishment was influenced by the global financial crisis of 2008 and the shift away from Western dominance in the control of the global monetary system, particularly institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Sarkar 2014). Consequently, South Africa was granted full membership in the organization during the BRIC Foreign Ministers meeting in New York in 2010, leading to a change in the organization's name from BRIC to BRICS.

However, when the global financial crisis struck the US economy in 2008, it created a window of opportunity for reevaluating changes to the framework of international

governance. The impact of the crisis on the unstable political and economic situations around the world, particularly in developing nations, led to the emergence of numerous regional power confederacies. As a result, the BRICS countries have grown in importance within the framework of world governance (Kipgen, K Thangjalén, and Sukalpa Chakrabarti 2022). One of the most important things to keep in mind is that the rise of the BRICS as a group of large and powerful 'new powers' is met with both skepticism and hope. Due to the increasing interdependence of all nations, it represents a danger to US-led Western hegemony in international affairs and a rapid change in the balance of power. Even Hu Jintao, the previous head of the People's Republic of China, has commended the BRICS countries as a force for world peace and as protectors and supporters of developing nations. One of the key goals of the BRICS meetings is to challenge US hegemony.

Furthermore, the BRICS should represent and defend the interests of the developing world. Whether one likes it or not, the BRICS are now a prominent factor in global geopolitics. When the group achieved its goals, it had the potential to have a structural impact on the global system of five members after South Africa's inclusion. The effect on the identity or future of a state configuration influences the structure. It is a member of an interregional organization. Countries from various places where Eurasia, Asia, Latin America, and Africa converge develop their own "region." Additionally, it might be emphasized as a mixed interregional grouping from the Third World. It goes beyond the boundaries of conventional definitions of interregionalism, including bi-interregionalism, mega-interregionalism, and trans-regionalism.

Theoretical Analysis

In this intrinsic phase of international relations, the role of the BRICS group is very crucial as they are the real replacing and contending powers to establish a new international order. Then, the question arises how would these countries cooperate in this complex global affair? Most of the realist theorists say the political and military power strength of the states define the prominent role in deciding global governance or global order. The rising of many powers in world affairs could lead to anarchy, which says the spread of powers to all sides of the globe can cause a lack of order in international relations (Morgenthau 1948). Russia, China, and India have increased their military and defense expenditures in recent years. The functionalist approach to international relations says establishing regions with economic and

cultural intentions then needs to focus on other defining things of the global order. If this is the case, what are these country's areas to cooperate? Liberalists argue that the world order can be brought about with human reason and rationality. If they can bring back the rule of law in the international system, it would lead to subjugating anarchy to bring back order. This is the modern trend of international relations to solve disputes between the states. Economic interdependence and global trade have played a significant role in transforming the world into a global village. Consequently, it becomes crucial to establish common legal norms within global institutions. Finally, it should establish common legal norms in global institutions.

Hence, dialogues play a crucial role in maintaining relations of world affairs (Moravcsik 1993). That is what is happening around the BRICS group countries. BRICS from the beginning have been claiming that they have collaborated to reform the existing global institutional structure. The BRICS believe that the existing global order is not democratic, and they want more voice for the global south countries. The BRICS aimed at reforming the UNSC, UNGA, IMF, WTO, and World Bank to represent the voice of the global south. That is why BRICS is systematically implementing its programme to bring sustainable changes to the global order. Seeing the growth of the BRICS, various like-minded nations are applying for BRICS membership. The recent South African BRICS indicated it.

Therefore, BRICS is not a revisionist, rather it is a democrat as is indicated so far. However, the important question is how the BRICS countries cooperate. The BRICS is comprised of complex nature of foreign policy countries who have contradictory approaches towards the reforming institutional structure of international relations. These are the critical questions to answer for these countries in upcoming international relations.

BRICS expansion

Recently, during the 15th BRICS summit held in Johannesburg, it was announced that the existing five-member BRICS grouping, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, had taken a significant step by inviting six new countries to join. These new invitees are Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from West Asia; Egypt and Ethiopia from Africa; and Argentina from Latin America. BRICS is shaping the future of international relations by advocating for multipolarity, asserting strategic autonomy, and fostering economic cooperation among its diverse members. Amidst criticism from Western

commentators, BRICS is carving out a unique path in global politics, making its recent summit a pivotal moment in modern history.

The authors were aware that the main topic of discussion at this 15th BRICS summit in South Africa would be the growth of the organization. Because they are already members, we had assumed that the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, and Bangladesh would be invited to join; they were already part of the New Development Bank of the BRICS. In the end, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Argentina, and Ethiopia were also invited to join in addition to the UAE and Egypt. Saudi Arabia has shocked everyone the most. Although there had been rumors that Saudi Arabia wished to join the organization, the geopolitical environment, given its hostile relations with the West, cast doubt on whether the kingdom would formally establish political and economic connections with the BRICS.

The inclusion of Saudi Arabia in the BRICS grouping, along with fellow oil and gas exporters Iran and the UAE, will unavoidably focus discussion on the usage of non-dollar currencies in trade. In a side note, Brazil suggested to Argentina at the conference that Brazil would ensure that Argentina would pay for Brazilian goods in renminbi. This may be a reflection of Argentina's capacity to access renminbi swap lines and highlight the dollar's dearth. Additionally, Argentina continues to be in serious financial trouble as it attempts to find hard currency to pay off debt that is primarily denominated in dollars.

Will BRICS expansion accelerate de-dollarisation?

Based on the current scenario it is observed that many nations would join BRICS and look at all the current evidence of de-dollarization. It is concluded that de-dollarization had been extremely sluggish and that the Chinese RMB had largely taken the market share that the dollar had lost in Asia. News of this rapid increase, particularly among the oil exporters, undoubtedly gives the de-dollarization discussion some additional traction. However, the authors would like to underline that just 15% of global trade is related to the energy sector and that Saudi Arabian oil shipments to China and India at non-dollar prices do not herald the end of the dollar as the preferred global reserve currency.

The liability function of a global currency is fundamental, as we suggested. The transition to a multi-polar world, in which the dollar, the euro, and the renminbi may become the dominant currencies in the Americas, Europe, and Asia respectively, is likely to take a

decade until international issuers and investors are willing to issue and hold international debt in non-dollar currencies.

BRICS expansion in the context of Global Trade

When the proposed BRICS expansion is considered in its larger global perspective, it seems that the additional invitees can have little influence on how trade is structured.

The core BRICS nations currently control about 23% of world exports and 19% of global imports. The new members would increase those percentages by 3.7% and 3.0%, respectively, with Saudi Arabia being the largest new member in terms of exports and the UAE being the largest new importer. The new members would increase the BRICS' overall weight in world trade by almost 16% and 3.7% of world exports come from the new BRICS invitees.

Recent new members have become more and more interested in commerce with BRICS. Their admission appears to represent the expanding trade relations with the founding BRICS countries while considering the additional members' international trade structures. Core BRICS imports from the new invitees surged from 23% to 30% during the past few years, displacing imports from the euro region, the USA, and other developed nations. From 25% to 28%, the core BRICS' share of exports from the additional members increased as well, albeit more subtly. There seems to be some basic premise for political statements being provided by the expanding trade interdependence.

What are the Regional Developments Shaping BRICS Membership Expansion?

1) Independent Foreign Policy:

Since 2020, specifically, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have both been known to pursue autonomous foreign policies. This suggests that instead of being highly influenced by outside powers like the United States, they have chosen to establish their sovereignty and make judgments about their foreign policy that are in line with their national interests.

2) Ending the Qatar Blockade:

Saudi Arabia's decision to lift the embargo on Qatar in January 2021 is regarded as a key step in this direction. The Gulf region underwent a tremendous transition as a result, as it showed a desire to settle local conflicts and enhance ties with the nations around it.

3) *Iran-UAE Relations:*

UAE wants to increase its marine presence in the Gulf, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, and Horn of Africa. It has normalized relations with Iran. The entry of Iran into BRICS presents chances for regional economic growth collaboration and the resumption of connection initiatives through India's Chabahar port.

BRICS expansion and implications

The recently concluded summit of the BRICS group consisting of five countries was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, President of China, Xi Jinping, President of Brazil Lula da Silva, and President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa participated in person at the conference. In addition, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov represented Russia and Russian President Vladimir Putin participated in the conference through video conferencing. The special thing about this conference was that now six more countries are in BRICS; it was also decided to include Argentina, UAE, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Egypt.

Although creating coalitions of nations to foster cooperation is a widespread practice worldwide, BRICS is more than just a collection of nations. This is a collection of those nations that have been challenging America and the Western nations' economic clout, which until recently dominated the global system. Whether it be mutual conflict or collaboration between different countries, it is conveyed very diplomatically from a diplomatic standpoint.

It is important to note that the GDPs of the five BRICS nations have been increasing quickly recently. In general, these nations have experienced very rapid growth, while developed nations have seen growth that is essentially at a stop. This is the reason why the five BRICS nations' share in the world economy, which was only 20.51 percent in 2011, will rise to 26.62 percent by 2023. Interestingly, there was scarcely any effective global forum to advance the voice of the developing world before the founding of BRICS. The concerns of poor countries began to be heard after the foundation of BRICS. Perhaps this explains why a growing number of emerging nations are eager to join BRICS. It is important to comprehend the consequences of this conference, where it was resolved to expand BRICS to include six more nations. With the addition of six nations, the enlarged group will account for 46% of the world's population and 29.6% of the world's GDP.

Organizations like BRICS work to defend the interests of developing nations. It is significant because now, developed nations like the USA and Europe attempt to impose their standards on developing nations. However, developing nations are also working to address their problems at the same time. Following the start of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Europe and the United States recently put sanctions on Russia, preventing it from receiving payments from nations with which it has commercial links. They will essentially be shut out of the 'SWIFT' system when it enters Europe's sphere of influence. The release of Russian funds to Russia stored at their central banks and other banks was prohibited at the same time by Europe and the USA. Considering this, the majority of emerging nations are currently wary of the United States and Europe. The developing nations are looking for measures to lessen the influence and hegemony of the wealthy countries as they work tirelessly to end their poverty and progress toward development.

How BRICS and its expanded form will satisfy the needs of the developing world is an intriguing question. Significantly, all other nations—aside from China and Russia—have been experiencing a trade imbalance, which has led to ongoing currency devaluations. Furthermore, these nations have frequently experienced payment issues when dealing with trade and payment imbalances. By settling international trade in local currencies, this balance of payments issue can be partially resolved. With banks from 19 different nations creating Vostro accounts to accept rupee payments, India has made great headway toward the settlement of international trade in rupees. However, when it comes to making foreign payments in local currencies, poor countries have often had little success. In the BRICS, discussions on making international payments in local currencies have been ongoing for a while. Not only that but the BRICS nations are also engaged in efforts to launch a new reserve currency under the BRICS moniker. The benefit of this new BRICS currency is that it will boost trade between BRICS nations while also avoiding the expensive exchange rate of dollars. However, choosing a currency for the BRICS would not be simple. However, the BRICS nations are first demonstrating a strong desire to trade among themselves in their national currencies. There are rumors that the BRICS nations would finally opt to settle international economic transactions in their home currencies at this summit. Particularly Brazil, South Africa, and India have begun to engage in domestic currency trading. Although India has also started making some Rupee-based trade payments to Russia.

The growth of BRICS will encourage the use of domestic currencies for payments in international trade. This will aid in breaking up the dollar's monopoly. Additionally, given many of the BRICS nations are dealing with balance of payments issues, this can greatly assist them in doing away with the need for dollars and their associated issues. Not only this, but an increase in commerce between BRICS nations may also help these nations' economies thrive. It can be very beneficial in fostering closer ties and more collaboration between developing nations.

The globe used to be bipolar at one point. America and the Soviet Union are on opposite sides. There were two such camps in the world: those who supported the US and those who supported the USSR. India was one of many nations that did not adhere to these alliances and was referred to as a non-aligned country. The world became unipolar after the fall of the Soviet Union. However, a multi-polar world is currently evolving because of the USA's declining dominance and India, China, and other developing nations' growing influence. However, some nations can still be seen supporting some powerful nations. Although the BRICS group seems to be growing stronger and free of European and American influence, some of the six BRICS countries were previously under US influence. However, some countries were previously under American influence, but they are no longer under American influence because of these countries' shifting allegiances in the changing times. On the other side, China's power has grown around the world, and certain nations are now clearly coming under its grip. Concerns are also being expressed regarding the BRICS grouping's ability to function cohesively given that the members come from disparate allegiances, with India and China in particular having tense relations.

Conclusion

Every international organization has an objective that it seeks to achieve or pursue, and this objective should be consistent with the national interests of all its members.

Similar to this, BRICS is a grouping of developing nations that are unified in their opposition to the West's hegemonic dominance in international organizations and in their support of reforms that are undertaken on their behalf. The five nation's union reveals its ambition for a more prominent role in world affairs and access to decision-making authority, even though the organization's original goals and focal area are economic cooperation and serving as the voice of the global south countries. The BRICS countries now account for a

larger proportion of the global nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Due to its membership in the two superpowers of the globe as well as the nations with the largest populations, it has also developed into an organization that is impossible to ignore.

The BRICS is a crucial player in global politics because of the members' strategic placement. The nations' contributions to international trade and security are crucial. In addition, the participants decided to increase the BRICS membership at the 14th summit, held in Beijing, China, in 2022. Argentina and Iran have consequently submitted their petitions to join the BRICS. Argentina and Iran are two nations that are poised to rise to prominence economically, possess large reserves of natural gas, and are big players in the world market for food supplies. There is a fair likelihood that some of the emerging economies in Southeast Asia and the Middle East will be intrigued by the BRICS as well. If BRICS can encourage new rising or developing nations to join the group, it will increase its global strength and influence. However, the process and steps have not been made official, and the BRICS organization does not yet have a charter or a suitable legal foundation for the admission of new members. There are doubts among the participants when it comes to promoting or giving full support to any state's application to join the BRICS.

Therefore, a charter must be in place as soon as possible for BRICS to expand, and new growing economic nations must be included to give them a stronger voice in the global organization. Additionally, there are areas of conflict or divergent policies pursued by China and India concerning the issues of the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific, all of which have the potential to obstruct the development of the BRICS. The fact that China and India, the two most powerful participants or members of the BRICS, are at odds with one another can make it difficult to develop and implement any strategy inside the group. To create a BRICS strategy and policy, Beijing and New Delhi must work together and put aside their animosity and mistrust for one another to attain the organization's objectives and growth.

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