



# The Impact of BRICS Expansion on the Current World Order

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It has been said that the recent expansion of the BRICS marks a [significant step](#) toward a new world order. This is a powerful claim that demands far more rigorous scrutiny from the scholarly community. This article introduces a novel actor-level conceptual framework that can be used to analyze the impact of the BRICS expansion on the world order. Using this framework, it then generates a set of interrelated questions about the BRICS expansion that demand answers from the scholarly community.

## Conceptual Framework

The international system is a network of sovereign states and non-sovereign nations. In network theory terms, the nodes of this network are the sovereign states and non-sovereign nations, and the edges in this network are the relations between these sovereign states and non-sovereign nations.

Specifically, the international system is a special type of complex network. It is an [overlapping community network](#). In network theory terms, the nodes in this network can be members of more than one community at the same time. This is the polar opposite of a non-overlapping community network.

Accordingly, sovereign states and non-sovereign nations can vary along the dimension of influence at two levels of analysis. Building on [Ghalmane et al](#) (2019), these include:

- **Local Level:** They can vary in terms of their influence on sovereign states and non-sovereign nations within their communities.
- **Global Level:** They can vary in terms of their influence on sovereign states and non-sovereign nations beyond their communities.

Similarly, sovereign states and non-sovereign nations can vary along the three dimensions of competition at two levels of analysis. Building on [Madsen](#) (2022), these include:

- **Local Level:** They can vary in terms of their competition over who should be included in the field of contestants, what should be the rules of the game, and what is the objective of the competition within their communities.

- **Global Level:** They can vary in terms of their competition over who should be included in the field of contestants, what should be the rules of the game, and what is the objective of the competition in the international system.

## Research Questions

Under this conceptual light, the expansion of the BRICS raises an important set of interrelated questions that demand answers from the scholarly community. These include:

- **Descriptive Questions:**
  - What is the impact of the BRICS expansion on the influence of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations within their communities and beyond their communities;
  - What is the impact of the BRICS expansion on the stance of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations on who should be included in the field of contestants, what should be the rules of the game, and what is the objective of the competition within their communities and in the international system?
- **Normative Questions:**
  - At present and in the future, what should be the influence of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations within their communities and beyond their communities;
  - At present and in the future, what should be the stance of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations on who should be included in the field of contestants, what should be the rules of the game, and what is the objective of the competition within their communities and in the international system?
- **Predictive Questions:**
  - In the future, what will be the influence of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations within their communities and beyond their communities;
  - In the future, what will be the stance of the new BRICS members, existing BRICS members, non-BRICS states, and non-sovereign nations on who should be included in the field of contestants, what should be the rules of the game, and



what is the objective of the competition within their communities and in the international system?

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