Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review
ISSN: (Online) 2310-2152, (Print) 2310-2195

The role of BRICS in global governance to promote economic development

Author:
Shikha Vyas-Doorgapersad[1]

Affiliation:
[1]School of Public Management, Governance and Public Policy, College of Business and Economics, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa

Corresponding author:
Shikha Vyas-Doorgapersad,
svyas-doorgapersad@uj.ac.za

Dates:
Received: 10 Feb. 2022
Accepted: 29 Sept. 2022
Published: 30 Nov. 2022

How to cite this article:
Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2022, 'The role of BRICS in global governance to promote economic development', *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review* 10(1), a633. https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v10i1.633

Background: The article assesses the significant role Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) countries, which comprise Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, play in economic development, and challenges experienced in realisation of economic goals. It is an area that is least researched in the domains of public administration.

Aim: The focus of the article is on the role of BRICS in achieving economic development.

Setting: The descriptive nature of the article provided a detailed explanation regarding the role of BRICS in the promotion of economic growth.

Methods: The qualitative research method was adopted in this article to compile information. The information was compiled through the review of available secondary data (literature and document reviews) that include scholarly books, Internet sources, articles and official documents.

Results: The findings confirmed that BRICS can achieve global governance through intercountry partnerships, which requires work on internal strategies to strengthen intra-BRICS relationships.

Conclusion: The article is an effort to discuss the role of BRICS, emphasising their relevance to economic development, especially during coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The suggestions can be applicable in country-specific contexts.

Contribution: The article intends to advance knowledge of the possibility that the BRICS' combined economic strength may significantly contribute to the expansion of the world economy and, consequently, to the promotion of global economic governance.

Keywords: globalisation; governance; good governance; global governance; global governance reforms; BRICS; economic development.

Introduction

Governance can be considered the fusion of various strategies employed by institutions and individuals while managing their affairs. As Keping (2018) posits, governance helps to consider diverse interests and opinions and enforce adherence to informal agreement of organisations to attain a common goal. Nevertheless, changing social, economic, and political environments; paradigm shifts in the field of administration; and global movement towards sustainable development goals (SDGs) all necessitated a more evolved and revolutionary approach to governance. Hence, a need of global governance emerges. Global governance can be considered a collective effort of institutions, strategies and interventions that assist governments and the governed working together to achieve firmness towards disasters, crises and calamities (see United Nations [UN] 2014). Transparency and accountability in global institutions, as well as the accomplishment of shared benefits through strategies and interventions, are all aspects of 'good' global governance. As a result, effective global governance necessitates a collaborative approach to mutual economic progress.

The existence of global governance has long been acknowledged by Prof. Wang Wen (an expert in financial studies) in 2017 when he admitted that globalisation has an impact on the process of global governance (Garrad 2018). Kruppa (2020:1) further emphasised that 'the globalised world needs global governance', adding that global governance is a continued process of 'balancing competing interests and launching collaborative action. The coordination of national policies and the identification of agreed norms and regulations serve as the foundation for this' for this' (Kruppa 2020:1). The author further stated that 'financial market regulation through the Bank for International Settlements and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's rules for multinational firms are two examples (OECD)' (Kruppa 2020:1). Global governance helps to pool resources together, as exemplified by the World Bank (WB) Group and International Monetary Fund

(IMF) (Kruppa 2020). This integrated involvement of global development institutions, according to Vyas-Doorgapersad and Aktan (2017), is gaining momentum among countries on a globalised scale. This involvement of states triggers cross-border economic and political movements that establish international communication networks and world-wide political (and economical) alliances (Garrad 2018:1) that are globalisation's changing trends in emerging markets. However, this leads to confusion whether there is any relation between globalisation and global governance. In the literature review on globalisation. Wal-Mart and George Soros were prime examples, as Dingwerth (2008) pointed out. Wal-Mart exemplifies a major shift in the balance of economic power, with manufacturers getting weaker and retailers getting stronger, together with China (the world's most populous country), which is shaping the global marketplace (Wilson 2007). George Soros, a billionaire investor, met Shinzo Abe, the prime minister of Japan, at Davos in January; he hectored him about asset management (The Economist 2014) and offered financial assistance towards the country's pension fund. Both these examples show economic cooperation at inter- and intra-Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) levels. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the World Commission on Dams (WCD) and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) all serve a similar role in global governance.

Globalisation includes knowledge transmission, cultural exchanges, economic networking and relations. As a global process, it helps to establish open markets that are not strongly regulated (Al-Rodhan 2006). Global governance, on the other hand, considers instructions, directives and procedures released by various institutions aiming to realise shared goals (see Benedict 2001). Under the arrangement of global governance, established institutions (e.g. WB, IMF) offer cross-border directives for assistance, cooperation and hence realisation of mutual development.

Global governance 'denotes a sum of collective efforts of global, national, and local actors to address consequences of increasing interdependence and to pursue global order based on specific goals and values' (Qoraboyev 2021:99). It can be further stated that global governance also serves as an analytical framework to better understand and explain contemporary political developments and socio-economic transformations (Qoraboyev 2021). It can be considered that globalisation can be divided into various branches: economic globalisation, social globalisation and environmental globalisation (UK Essays 2020). Economic globalisation covers foreign aid, trade, international flow and social globalisation that stems from the fusion of various cultures and societies including environmental globalisation, hence triggering global warming (UK Essays 2020). The understanding of varied aspects of globalisation is important for policymakers, decision-makers and economic analysts as it provides clarity on the impact of global governance on globalisation, 'specifically from an economic point of view' (UK Essays 2020:1).

In fact, economic globalisation has raised the issue of global governance and with it the question of how to make global governance as democratic as possible. Thus, economic globalisation has led to an internationalisation of domestic politics (Hart & Spero 2008). Nonetheless, as cited in Nadeem, Hayat and Nazir (2014) regarding globalisation, a major unresolved issue is how to integrate globalisation with governance. The globalisation and governance nexus is still a debate on which consensus is yet to be reached.

This article aims to discuss and assess how BRICS countries participate to achieve economic development through financial assistance and economic cooperation, hence contributing to the global economy.

Research methodology

This study is qualitative in nature because it pursues a cautious and comprehensive account of social practice, as considered by Bangani and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2020:2). The information is compiled from a literature review. Various articles, books and Internet sources were consulted for identifying terms and headings used in this article as inclusion criteria, such as BRICS, governance, good governance, global governance, economic global governance, global trade governance, economic status of BRICS, international institutions paying significant role in economic development and information related to research methodology. The information was gathered as follows:

- Nine books were consulted to compile information on global governance (5), globalisation (1), BRICS (2) and economic global governance (1), published between 2006 and 2021.
- Thirty-seven Internet sources were utilised to collect information on the Russian economy (1), the economic impact because of the Russia–Ukraine conflict (1), the South African economy (1), the Indian economy (1), the Brazilian economy (1), the global economy (1), BRICS (13), globalisation and governance (1), governance (1), global governance (14), good global governance (1) and global economic governance (1), published between 2007 and 2022.
- Thirteen journal articles were consulted to gather information, such as research methodology (3), BRICS (3), international institutions (2), global trade governance (1), global governance (1), governance (1) and good governance (2), published between 1994 and 2021.
- Various government and institutional platforms were searched to compile information, such as the BRICS Information Portal (2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d), Social Watch (2020) and the Government of South Africa (2021), which were considered sources of information to compile information on varied aspects of BRICS; Marbella International University Centre (2019), United Nations (2014) and UK Essays (2020) to gather information on global governance; World Economic Forum (2020) on SDG; Statista Research Department (2021) on coronavirus disease 2019's (COVID-19) impact

on economy in Russia; and WB (2021a, 2021b) on BRICS and the South African economy.
- News channels and newspaper articles were used to gather information, such as The Economist (2014) to gather information on Japan's pension and The Conversation (2021) and BBC News (2021) on China's economy.
- One MA dissertation (2011) on global governance and two PhD theses (2020, 2021) were consulted to gather information on research methodology.

The information was analysed through conceptual and document analysis. A conceptual analysis, as observed by Mutenga (2021) provides a comprehensive analysis of theories and major concepts utilised when conducting a study, which is vital for examining the relationships between variables and concepts influencing the phenomenon under study in order to draw conclusions. Nyikadzino and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2020:236) elaborate that document analysis encompasses critical reading drawn from a wide analysis of detailed written data. Nhlapo (2020) considers unobtrusive research methods to be a significant critique of positivism or the idea that truth about the social world can be found by scientific measurement. Instead, they subscribe to the interpretivist epistemological paradigm, which holds that social sciences are fundamentally distinct from natural sciences, necessitating researchers to abandon empiricism and understand the subjective meaning of social action. The documents used in this study included books, journal articles and Internet sources.

Global governance reforms and emergence of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

Discussions surrounding global governance are old, as they date back to the end of World War I with the leaders of the victorious Allies assembling in Paris for 6 months in 1919. Their intention was to have a broad discussion regarding how they would partition the global borders and erect a permanent forum (League of Nations) that would cater for future world problems and issues. As argued by Boughton and Bradford (2007), delegates from 30 countries arrived at the Paris Conference, although France, the United Kingdom and the United States dominated as they had controlling powers on the proceedings. Reports from the conference revealed that states agreed to establish national institutions that would help secure economic prosperity and political stability (Lopez-Claros, Dahl & Groff 2020). Further roles to be played by such institutions include ending the Cold War, decolonisation and ensuring global security, global poverty and environmental threats (Bradford & Linn 2007a). Nonetheless, establishment of such national institutions was perceived to be crucial, although poor management may weaken countries' growth because of persistent poverty, civil wars, crime and political instabilities. Promoting good governance, as Lopez-Claros et al. (2020) argue, requires strong institutions that lean heavily on the rule of law. In addition to the establishment of institutions, agreements such as Bretton Woods in New Hampshire around 1945 were also meant to strengthen the UN and guarantee political relations and stability in countries. Other multilateral agencies, such as the Dumbarton Oaks mansion in Washington, DC, and San Francisco, moulded economic relations in the following 6 decades, aiding the UN's security council, the WB and the IMF, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This form of global governance, in which the few countries at the top of the global economic pyramid encouraged others to join without relinquishing much influence, became the dominant paradigm in the postwar period (Boughton & Bradford 2007).

Thereafter, the economic crisis in the world after World War II resulted in the slowdown of the global economy. Governments alone were not able to handle the financial deliverance and negatively impacted economic growth; hence, a shift occurred towards transnational and regional powers to come to the fore. This was the beginning of global governance.

The founding of the Group of Ten (G10) primary industrial countries in 1962, according to Boughton and Bradford (2007), is an example of change. The G5 was founded in the 1970s and later expanded to the G7 in the 1980s and the G8 in the 1990s. Developing countries founded the G77 in 1964 and a subgroup, the G24, in 1971 to oppose the enormous influence of these groups of industrial countries. The G7 invited several rising-market developing countries to join them in a new G20 grouping in 1999 (Boughton & Bradford 2007) to address persisting difficulties.

Bradford (n.d.) adds that the G20's non-G8 members are all significant developing market economies with attractive economies and societies. It includes countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey. The G20, which includes the G8 plus Australia, accounts for 64% of global population, compared with 14% for the G8 (Bradford n.d.). However, there is a lack of representation from poor countries, especially from Africa. The exclusion of countries that are already poor and have struggling economic growth fail to achieve the notion of good global governance. It needs to be observed that the term BRIC '(without South Africa) was coined in 2001' (Chen 2020:1), and South Africa was only 'added to the list in 2010' (Chen 2020:1). Hence, BRICS is an offshoot of the Bandung Conference held in 1955, where African and Asian states came together to galvanise their collective power in the context of the Cold War and assert themselves in the international system. In the context of South Africa, the Bandung Conference, which resulted in the foundation of the nonaligned movement (NAM), was a watershed moment in developing countries' international relations (Government of South Africa 2021). It will be claimed that South Africa can maintain its status as Africa's gateway if it forms a strategic partnership with Brazil as part of a bigger Southern African Development Community (SADC) – Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) union based on real initiatives (Kahn 2011). In forthcoming years, these measures will be examined to signify the role of South

Africa in BRICS and in the development of other African countries through this BRICS–Africa relationship.

International power shifts have historically led to conflicts over representation in global governance (Parízek & Stephen 2018). For realists, international institutions need to privilege powerful states if they are to remain stable. Indeed, because powerful states create and control international institutions to further their interests, this is their main purpose (see Mearsheimer 1994). China, for example, may be evaluating revisionist or status quo powers, that is, whether they wish to change the laws that govern political and economic relations (Stephen & Parzek 2019). It is inconceivable for constructivists to account for significant developments in international politics without considering the social dimension. Norms, culture and beliefs all play a part; a movement in one's perspective can drastically alter the character of that governance and vice versa (Roen 2011). For constructivists, the emphasis is on the legitimacy of institutions. For example, the extent to which international economic institutions can claim to be representative has therefore become, in a sociological sense, a critical resource of their own legitimation (see Rapkin, Strand & Trevathan 2016). Governance must be carried out under the confines of neoliberal theories of minimal government and self-regulating markets in a neoliberal regime. Citizens and their representatives lose power because of this form of administration, which shifts control to people with money. As a result, the neoliberal view of government renews an older liberal tradition by placing power squarely in the hands of the bourgeoisie or those with capital to invest and a desire to amass more (Ives 2015). Global governance is a product of neoliberal paradigm shifts in international political and economic relations (Jang, McSparren & Rashchupkina 2016). The establishment and development of the G20 corresponds harmoniously with the neoliberal institutionalist framework (Cicek & Muftuler-Bac 2015). Neoliberal institutionalism maintains that the international system is chaotic, the focus is on systematic variables, states are rational-unitary agents and that state-to-state harmony is considered a philosophical value rather than a practical principle. The grand unifier of these theories is rationality (Cicek & Muftuler-Bac 2015). This is indeed what Jim O'Neill had in mind when he argued that the rise of the BRICS economies required creating a new G7 that would be more effective as a forum for macro-economic policy coordination (Stephen & Parízek 2019). The BRICS countries, according to Jim O'Neill, have the potential to become new competitors. This group of countries offered data on their economic progress and how they may become the driving force behind growth. There is no data on how each member approaches their aspects of benefit redistribution in terms of micro-economic policy. This aspect might be explored in future research.

The role of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa in economic development

The role of BRICS in promoting global governance has increased as it targets international cooperation and economic emancipation among member countries (Larionova 2020). This status of the economic credibility of BRICS is substantiated by Majaski (2020), who observed that in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) dating back to 1990, BRIC countries achieve 11% of the GDP, with the figure improving to 30% by 2014. Larionova (2020:2) added that in 2020, 19% of global exports and 16% of global imports, including 19% incoming and outgoing direct investment, came from BRICS states. These figures maintained and sustained by BRICS countries confirm that these five countries may be able to assist other emerging economies with financial growth. It was stated by Morazan et al. (2012) that stability was maintained by BRICS countries as economic cooperation was improved among other developing countries. The stability was maintained because of BRICS's domestic and foreign policies. This statement is substantiated by Brosig (2021:6), who emphasised that 'through its operating principles [BRICS] creates a friendly international environment free of any critique of domestic affairs, which, in the end, supports existing political structures rather than challenging them'. It is further clarified by Brosig (2021) that the grouping's foreign policy value becomes relevant when it is able to reduce external risks to domestic challenges. As Morazan et al. (2012) posits, BRICS countries, as a collection of emerging economies, play a critical role in the world economy; hence, their importance as protagonists in development cooperation is highlighted by three main factors: the size of their economies; strong growth rates, which lead to increased importance in the global economy; and the demand for a stronger political voice in international governance structures, which corresponds to their economic status (Radulescua, Panaita & Voica 2014). Larionova (2020) supported these opinions but questions how BRICS can contribute towards global economic development. The answer lies in its credibility as proven economic performance in their country-specific contexts. Ding Yifan, deputy director of the China Development Research Center, backed this claim, saying that the BRICS countries have indicated a strong desire to participate in and act on global economic governance (Yifan 2018). As the structure of the global economy changes dramatically, the BRICS countries have expressed a strong desire to participate in and take action on global economic governance. With regard to the existing international system, the BRICS countries have supported multilateralism and promoted domestic reform to make the system more equitable (Yifan 2018). Whether within the framework of the United Nations or the G20, the BRICS countries are actively collaborating, seeking to speak with one voice. The BRICS countries have played an active role in promoting global economic growth, fighting the return of protectionism and strengthening cooperation in the supervision of financial markets (Yifan 2018). McKinley (2018) validated these aspirations by using the CAM (the Cambridge-Alphametrics model), a novel global macro-econometric model, to forecast the relative future medium-term relevance of the BRICS within the global economy. The BRICS (McKinley 2018) account for 30.4% of global GDP, which could be maintained until 2030 to accelerate economic growth while assisting developing economics through BRICS investment spending. Such projects and their impact on the global economy will be examined in future research projects. However, the situation has changed. The 'Russia-Ukraine conflict has triggered turmoil in the financial markets, and drastically increased uncertainty about the recovery of the global economy' (Coface 2022:1). The world has shifted, and so have the risks, whereby higher commodity prices intensify the threat of long-lasting high inflation, which increases the risks of stagflation and social unrest, and certain sectors such as automotive, transport or chemicals are more likely to suffer (Coface 2022). This situation is already creating a financial downfall in European and BRICS countries, and the effect is felt on the global economy as well.

Challenges associated with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa during COVID-19

In addition to the Russia–Ukraine war, the spread of COVID-19 has also caused economic damage to BRICS countries and adversely affected their finances. In the case of *Brazil*, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the country to an unprecedented health, social and economic challenge, leading to a 4.1% GDP decline in 2020, followed by a rebound in 2021. An emerging recovery in demand, both domestic and external, and a pick-up in commodity prices are expected to push GDP growth to 5.3% in 2021 (The World Bank 2021a). The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2021) has released the 'Economic Forecast Summary in December 2021' that highlighted that for the country, the GDP growth is projected to reach 5% in 2021 but to slow down to 1.4% in 2022 and 2.1% in 2023. The vaccination campaign has accelerated and economic activity, underpinned by private consumption and investment, restarted as restrictions were lifted. Exports have benefited from the global recovery, the robust demand for commodities and a weak exchange rate (OECD 2021). However, supply bottlenecks, lower purchasing power, higher interest rates and policy uncertainty have slowed the pace of recovery. The labour market is recovering with some delay, and unemployment remains above prepandemic levels (OECD 2021).

In the case of *Russia*, the Statista Research Department (SRD) published a report entitled 'Key socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 pandemic in Russia 2021', highlighting that the most often mentioned socio-economic issue stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia was the growth in unemployment, according to 60% of surveyed Russians in 2021 (SRD 2021). The unemployment rate was falling before the COVID-19 crisis, but real wages had also fallen. Social inequalities remain high, especially between large cities and rural areas. Only 1% of the population owns around 70% of private assets. Despite the emergence of an urban middle class, the poverty rate remains at around 13% (Standard Bank South Africa 2022). A middle-class protest movement calls for an end to corruption and patronage. According to International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates, the unemployment rate increased to 5.8% in 2020 under the effect of the pandemic (Standard Bank South Africa 2022).

In the context of *India*, as per the official data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the Indian economy contracted by 7.3% in the April–June quarter of this fiscal year, 2021 (Mangla 2021). The surveys conducted by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy shows a steep rise in unemployment rates, from 7.9% to 12% during the April–June quarter of 2021 (Mangla 2021). Exploring the 'Impact of COVID-19 on Indian economy', Mangla (2021) highlighted that the GDP growth had crashed 23.9% in response to the centre's decision of lockdown without notice. India's GDP shrank by 7.3% in 2020–21. This was the worst performance of the Indian economy in any year since independence (Mangla 2021) in 1947.

China was the first country to be affected by COVID-19 and took unprecedented lockdown measures that led to a historic decline in growth of at least 6% in 2020 (The Conversation 2021). In the first quarter of 2020, China's economy shrank by 6.8% because of nationwide lockdown at the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak (BBC News 2021).

In *South Africa*, by the end of 2020, despite two quarters of employment growth, the number of employed people had fallen by nearly 1.5 million, and the wages of workers who still had jobs had fallen by 10% – 15% (The World Bank 2021b). In April of 2020, the International Labour Organization predicted global job losses of about 305 million and an estimated 1.6 billion jobs at risk for the 'most vulnerable in the labour market' (Borgen 2021).

There are concerns raised on the role of global governance during the pandemic that is affecting the economic status in the intra-BRICS context. In a study entitled, 'Global governance reforms to achieve Sustainable Development Goal One (no poverty) in BRICS', Vyas-Doorgapersad (2021) voiced the existence of COVID-19 and the challenges the world is experiencing as a common threat. This pandemic-driven situation has caused friction in opinions that is witnessed in the policies of dominating countries such as the USA and Europe. These countries are facing internal challenges with strategising health policies and fighting to successfully operate the health sector. In addition, the economies of such resourceful countries are facing major downfalls (see Vyas-Doorgapersad [2021]). In this scenario, Vyas-Doorgapersad further raised questions such as:

> Do BRICS have economic resources to bring financial stability and fiscal strengthening to its own member states and Can BRICS also assist member states to bring economic viability despite financial struggle within their own countries in a post-COVID-19 era? (p. 9)

To answer the nature of these concerns, information portals need to be established that can offer official reports on multinational partnerships, discussions and strategies to assist policymakers with formulation of policies and strategies through information sharing. One such portal is the BRICS Information Portal, which has information to find solutions to concerns raised here in the BRICS context. According to the information compiled, it can be considered that China and Russia assessed their investment cooperation progress and agreed to work together to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitate the resumption of work and production in bilateral investment cooperation, resulting in more tangible results (BRICS Information Portal 2020c).

South Africa is in a tight fiscal space, which has been worsened by the pandemic. The government had to borrow to cushion the citizens from the negative impact of COVID-19 (BRICS Information Portal 2020b); hence the country's relationship with BRICS is important to aid its recovery efforts, especially on increasing trade and investment (BRICS Information Portal 2020b). A core component of this strategy is to increase intra-BRICS investment (BRICS Information Portal 2020b). The New Development Bank (NDB) repurposed its lending programme in helping BRICS members to fight the pandemic. The bank announced a $10 billion emergency assistance programme, which allowed fast-track disbursements for COVID-19-related loans made as bullet payments within a month of approval. The loan would usually take several months to be disbursed for an infrastructure project (BRICS Information Portal 2020d). Furthermore, as indicated by the BRICS Information Portal (2020a). member states have undertaken to fortify their economic cooperation, thereby safeguarding multilateral trading systems towards revamping their antipandemic cooperation.

Challenges associated with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa for global governance

The COVID-19 pandemic was an external shock to BRICS countries. In addition, there are internal challenges within BRICS, discussed in this section. However, it is a matter of discussion how BRICS can incorporate the aims of global governance when differences exist among member states in terms of socio-economic demography, different historical backgrounds and political arrangements. According to Guriev (2015), the BRICS membership is the only association binding them together. Notably, Brazil and India pursue democratic governance processes, while China and Russia do not. As indicated further by Guriev (2015), Russia and Brazil export hydrocarbons, while India and China are net importers. As UN Security Council permanent members, China and Russia possess added advantage over other BRICS countries in terms of inequality, healthy levels of income and financial systems (Guriev 2015).

Colakoglu (2017) affirms the complexities surrounding BRICS because of its dual mechanistic structure that portrays a Sino-Russian strategic alliance established in early 1990s, while it also poses as a democratic trio of India, Brazil and South Africa. As a result of these unresolved challenges, BRICS has two opposing political blocs in Asia because China and Russia support Iran and Pakistan, while India supports the United States and Japan (Colakoglu 2017). The BRICS states are being affected by border disputes between China and India, whereas Russia's reproachment policy with Pakistan poses a challenge because India supported the USA in its Cold War against Russia (Colakoglu 2017). The notion of global governance falls flat as BRICS do not have the cohesion to speak a common language to provide coordination of actions and plans.

Irrespective of these concerns, BRICS countries are ready to show their existence in the international arena through reformulation, reshaping and redesigning of global development priorities. According to Petropoulos (2013), the BRICS countries' collaboration is projected to increase their prominence in world politics, particularly in financial affairs. The successful engagement of BRICS economies in international negotiations about how to address the financial crisis, as well as their successful push for enhanced voting rights for BRICS economies within the IMF, are examples of its power.

Petropoulos (2013) goes on to say that the BRICS leaders' apparent commitment to expanding their collaboration could foreshadow the future articulation of numerous BRICS countries' viewpoints on global and regional issues ranging from international economics and currency matters to politics and security. Increased collaboration in one area, as theories of regional integration predict, might eventually lead to spillover effects, gradually extending the points of cooperation and coordination and, eventually, the BRICS nations' influence, resulting in their membership inside international institutions.

Matovska, Trajkoska and Siljanovska (2014) have pointed out that the BRICS countries are becoming a political factor because of their tremendous economic might, creating a balance of forces in international relations. However, it is important to consider that BRICS may have gained economic wealth and influence, but Western international financial markets continue to utilise it. The top positions at the WB and the IMF still wield enormous power on the opposite side. Nonetheless, the investment in international relations, according to Matovska et al. (2014), will change the BRICS countries themselves, as well as the ties of the existing major forces, the United States and the European Union, with the BRICS and the perspectives on the likelihood of an economic boom. It is projected that the world's top countries would begin to create a new world order because of these new constellations of relations inside the globalised globe.

These statements are substantiated with the findings of Merlo (2014), who conducted a study exploring the role played by BRICS in global governance. The findings of Merlo's (2014) study highlighted that, 'in addition to a well-established commitment by the G77 + China to national sovereignty and to poverty eradication' (cited in Vyas-Doorgapersad 2021:6), the BRICS placed a particular emphasis on two new principles for global development, as highlighted by Merlo (2014).

The first principle is called *universality*, which happens when, according to Merlo (2014), all countries and people will be affected by the SDGs. This is in stark contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were aimed solely at underdeveloped countries. This is a tremendous paradigm change from a framework that focused on aid from the richest to the poorest countries to end poverty, to a global approach to attaining and assessing development (Merlo 2014). The second principle emerged as an idea that Merlo (2014) called *common but differentiated responsibilities* (CBDR), which began as an international environmental legal theory, asserting that while countries share the same duties, they do not have the same instruments, skills or stages of development to carry them out (Merlo 2014). These aims may be achieved through joint declarations and multinational partnerships with other countries.

Challenges associated with global governance

The Social Watch (2020) indicates many issues (inequality, foreign, debt, official development assistance [ODA], poverty) of concern globally have not been adequately addressed, owing to limited political will and capacity by the UN. Bradford and Linn (2007b) reiterate that the absence of organisational capacity on various international institutions, including governance societies, is harmful as poverty, terrorism, climate change and financial integration have not been addressed. This is because the G8, a collection of rich countries, determines and defines global policies, as seen at the World Economic Forum and World Trade Organisation (WTO), becoming the implementers of such policies (Social Watch 2020). The economic depression that affected G8 states threatened governance systems as low-income countries were forced to attend the G20, showing the power shifts and imbalances (Social Watch 2020). This demands more intragovernmental cooperation to deal with issues affecting development in country-specific contexts.

The SDGs are global goals to combat global challenges, but literature on global governance does not absolutely cover aspects of SDGs. These development goals are left with individual countries expecting them to find country-specific solutions. This undermines the aim and management of the global governance issues (Khan 2008:1). Global governance is not successful in managing global affairs, as substantiated by the report of the World Economic Forum (WEF 2020). This is because when the SDGs were passed, many countries had not succeeded in implementing them because of many issues such as trade wars and inequalities (WEF 2020). In terms of implementation of the SDGs, the responsibility therefore lies with individual countries; hence, the scenario is more of a state governance than a global governance.

There is also a lack of regional coordination, for example, in countries such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Libya, Uganda and Ethiopia, as signs of economic and political depression are rampant (Vyas-Doorgapersad 2011). In addition, Vyas-Doorgapersad (2011:238) observes the danger of political squabbles in African countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Ghana and Zambia. However, it is only South Africa that is part of the BRICS, and hence the issues of other African countries are not fully incorporated to acquire international cooperation. The benefit of global governance includes mutual state cooperation and networking that ensure decentralisation of political decision-making (Coll 2015). This is again a matter of detailed discussion as, for example, in the African continent, devolution is still a matter requiring political support. The countries with centralised systems of governance are far from receiving the benefits of global governance.

Another issue of concern is the global institutions that are established to implement the aims of global governance. For example, the IMF is dominated by European influence, and the WB is under the influence of the USA; hence, it offers membership to developed countries. The evidence also revealed that China could pose a threat to BRICS in future, notwithstanding the sour relations created by the Trump and Bolsonaro administrations (Bond 2019). The leadership of K.V. Kamath as the NDB president and the ideas of New Developmentalism and sustainable development financing (Bond 2019) have been significant to observe in the coming years. However, the concern remains the same. There is still a lack of global governance in the establishment of the NDB as, according to Smith (2019), it only gives loans to member countries.

It can be considered that global economic governance is still facing challenges owing to the financial crisis of 2008 where fuel and food were scarce (Te Velde & Keane 2011) and which resurfaced on a wider scale because of COVID-19. Despite all preventive measures, it is important to strategise corrective measures with a proactive approach, based on past experiences and existing challenges. In addition, Te Velde and Keane (2011) observed the threats posed by developing economies as their needs are not aligned with global institutions; hence, the EU, for instance, should consider such diversified economic interests of countries to promote global cooperation and mutual economic benefits. Bradford and Linn (2004) argue on the complexity of assessing the global economies in G7 and G8 countries because of poor alignment of global economic governance policies with the prevailing world conditions. Although South Africa is in BRICS, G20 and IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), problems can appear with regard to the welfare of African states (Obi 2015).

Conclusion

The BRICS countries may play an important role in accelerating economic growth, enhancing cooperation in financial markets and ensuring protectionism in Africa (Yifan 2018). Mninele, the former governor of the South African Reserve Bank, claims that in 2016, Africa has been subjected to unstable capital flows because of the global financial crisis, which Mohamed El Erian perceived to be tourist dollars binding BRICS countries to achieve a uniform objective by transforming the international financial and monetary system. The role played by BRICS countries is therefore crucial in the G20, as it defines global economic policy that promotes financial stability (Mminele 2016; Tian et al. 2020). However, even though BRICS are emerging economies, internal strategies are required to deal with issues such as individualistic political environment, excessive reliance on bureaucracy, lack of fiscal and monetary policies, inadequate national support on national development goals, corruption and financial misconduct, to state a few. These traits may hamper the achievement of the SDGs, especially SDG 1 that deals with reduction of poverty, because of inadequate good economic governance in country-specific contexts and good global economic governance in regional and international contexts. In addition, BRICS need to understand that the socio-economic and political contexts within their boundaries are different from those of Europe and the USA; hence, lessons from developed countries cannot be simply applied to emerging economies. The global governance principle of international cooperation can be considered as an aid but cannot be successful if forces 'within' and 'in between' BRICS are not cooperating to achieve the economic goals.

It is equally important to consider that BRICS countries hold diversity in terms of cultural norms, political ideologies and social demographics (poverty, unemployment) that all impact economic decisions within their intracountry context. Enhancing shared goals in the intercountry context requires mutual understanding of challenges experienced in each country and taking collective decisions through constructive dialogues to set priorities for corrective measures and support. This understanding demands that BRICS countries assess their domestic financial status and economic policies and develop economic cooperation and relationship with each other. In addition, each BRICS country has a wealth of resources that can be used to offer economic aid through joint declarations. This may require BRICS to open domestic markets for export–import of resources. This arrangement may assist BRICS to strengthen their markets without seeking financial support from countries outside the parameters of BRICS. The financial independence will strength confidence to find more economically feasible measures to expand domestic markets for economic gain within BRICS. The collective economic strength of BRICS can be a significant factor to strengthen the global economy and hence promote global economic governance.

Acknowledgements

The author, in general, would like to acknowledge the works of scholars who have contributed their knowledge debating the aspects of BRICS in global governance to promote economic development.

Competing interests

The author has declared that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Author's contributions

S.V.D. is the sole author of this article.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author.

References

Al-Rodhan, N.R.F., 2006, *Definitions of globalisation: A comprehensive overview and a proposed definition*, Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva.

Bangani, A. & Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2020, 'The implementation of gender equality within the South African Public Service', *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review* 8(1), a353. https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v8i1.353

BBC News, 2021, *China's economy grows 18.3% in post-Covid comeback*, 16 April, viewed 12 January 2022, from https://www.bbc.com/news/business-56768663.

Benedict, K., 2001, *Global governance*, viewed 07 April 2020, from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B0080430767044995.6232-6237.

Bond, P., 2019, *Does BRICS banking offer an alternative to the IMF and World Bank? Pessimistic signals from South Africa*, viewed 07 April 2020, from https://www.cadtm.org/Does-BRICS-Banking-offer-an-Alternative-to-the-IMF-and-World-Bank-Pessimistic.

Borgen, 2021, *Effects of COVID-19 on the South African Economy*, viewed 02 February 2022, from https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/global-governance.

Boughton, J.M. & Bradford, C.I., Jr., 2007, *Global governance: New players, new rules: Why the 20th-century model needs a makeover*, viewed 03 April 2020, from https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2007/12/pdf/boughton.pdf.

Bradford, C.I., Jr., n.d., *Global governance reform for the 21st century,* viewed 29 March 2020, from https://www.oecd.org/dev/34983436.pdf.

Bradford, C.I. & Linn, J.F. 2004, *Global economic governance at a crossroads: Replacing the G-7 with the G-20*, viewed 20 October 2022, from https://www.brookings.edu/research/global-economic-governance-at-a-crossroads-replacingthe-g-7-with-the-g-20/.

Bradford, C.I. & Linn, J.F. 2007a. *Reform of Global Governance: Priorities for Action,* viewed 20 October 2022, from https://www.brookings.edu/research/reform-of-global-governance-priorities-for-action/.

Bradford, C.I., Jr. & Linn, J.F., 2007b, *Global governance reform*, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC.

BRICS Information Portal, 2020a, *BRICS countries to step up economic, trade cooperation*, viewed 22 November 2020, from http://infobrics.org/post/32302.

BRICS Information Portal, 2020b, *BRICS partnership to help S. Africa recover from COVID-19 – Expert*, viewed 22 November 2020, from http://infobrics.org/post/32311.

BRICS Information Portal, 2020c, *China and Russia agree support for each other's pandemic fight-back*, viewed 22 November 2020, from http://infobrics.org/post/32312.

BRICS Information Portal, 2020d, *The BRICS strengthens economic ties in the post-pandemic era*, viewed 22 November 2020, from http://infobrics.org/post/32291.

Brosig, M., 2021, *Has BRICS lost its appeal? The foreign policy value added of the group*, viewed 12 June 2022, from https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057/s41311-021-00327-y.pdf.

Chen, J., 2020, *Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS)*, viewed 19 March 2021, from https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brics.asp.

Cicek, A.E. & Muftuler-Bac, M., 2015, *Shifts and trends in global governance: An empirical analysis of G20*, viewed 06 April 2020, from http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/GSCIS%20Singapore%202015/Archive/b2432fcf-a163-45c8-a8a4-3fc054ba9600.pdf.

Coface, 2022, *Economic consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict: Stagflation ahead*, viewed 12 June 2022, from https://www.coface.com/Economic-Studies-and-Country-Risks.

Colakoglu, S., 2017, *BRICS: A new decision-maker in global governance?* Diplo Foundation, Malta.

Coll, J.M., 2015, *Cities emerging soft power: 5 Key advantages for improved global governance*, viewed 04 April 2020, from http://www.cidob.org>content>download>version>file.

Dingwerth, K., 2008, *From international politics to global governance? The case of nature conservation*, Universität Bremen: Institute for Intercultural and International Studies (InIIS), Bremen.

Garrad, V., 2018, *The turn of the screw: The impact of globalisation on global governance*, viewed 23 November 2020, from https://www.e-ir.info/2018/04/14/the-turn-of-the-screw-the-impact-of-globalisation-on-global-governance/.

Government of South Africa, 2021, *Fifth BRICS summit – General background*, viewed 13 March 2021, from https://www.gov.za/events/fifth-brics-summit-general-background#.

Guriev, S., 2015, *Five questions about the BRICS nations*, World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland.

Hart, J. & Spero, J.E., 2008, *Globalisation and global governance in the 21st century*, viewed 09 March 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jeffrey_Hart3/publication/267257543_Globalization_and_Global_Governance_in_the_21_st_Century/.

Ives, A., 2015, *Neoliberalism and the concept of governance: Renewing with an older liberal tradition to legitimate the power of capital*, viewed 23 March 2020, from https://journals.openedition.org/mimmoc/2263.

Jang, J., McSparren, J. & Rashchupkina, Y., 2016, *Global governance: Present and future*, viewed 26 March 2020, from https://doi.org/10.1057/palcomms.2015.45.

Kahn, M.J., 2011, 'The BRICs and South Africa as the gateway to Africa', *The Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy* 111(7), 493–496.

Keping, Y., 2018, 'Governance and good governance: A new framework for political analysis', *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 11, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40647-017-0197-4

Khan, N., 2008, *What is the importance of global governance?* viewed 13 March 2020, from https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-importance-of-global-governance.

Kruppa, C., 2020, *Global governance-shaping globalisation*, viewed 12 March 2021, from https://english.bdi.eu/article/news/global-governance-shaping-globalisation/.

Larionova, M., 2020, *Role of BRICS in the global economy*, viewed 23 November 2020, from http://infobrics.org/post/31036/.

Lopez-Claros, A., Dahl, A.L. & Groff, M., 2020, *A history of global governance*, viewed 29 March 2020, from https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/global-governance-and-the-emergence-of-global-institutions-for-the-21st-century/history-of-global-governance/48AFB3734CB455C14C0F5AC0A483C002.

Majaski, C., 2020, *Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC)*, viewed 11 August 2021, from https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/bric.asp.

Mangla, S., 2021, *Impact of covid-19 on Indian economy*, viewed 24 January 2022, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/shreyansh-mangla/impact-of-covid-19-on-indian-economy-2-35042/.

Marbella International University Centre (MIUC), 2019, *Defining global governance*, MIUC, Marbella, Spain.

Matovska, M., Trajkoska, J. & Siljanovska, Z., 2014, 'The impact of BRICS from economic, legal and political aspect in the international community', *European Scientific Journal* 1, 370–375. https://doi.org/10.4236/blr.2014.52013

McKinley, T., 2018, *BRICS to play a leading role in driving future global economic growth*, viewed 14 July 2012, from https://www.ineteconomics.org/perspectives/blog/brics-to-play-a-leading-role-in-driving-future-global-economic-growth.

Mearsheimer, J., 1994, 'The false promise of international institutions', *International Security* 19(3), 5–26. https://doi.org/10.2307/2539078

Merlo, J., 2014, *The role of the BRICS in changing global governance: A case study of the post-2015 development negotiations*, Center on International Cooperation, New York, NY.

Mminele, D., 2016, *The role of BRICS in the global economy*, viewed 04 July 2021, from https://www.bis.org/review/r160720c.htm.

Morazan, P., Knoke, I., Knoblauch, D. & Schafer, T., 2012, *The role of brics in the developing world*, European Union, Brussels. https://doi.org/10.2861/75486

Mutenga, M., 2021, 'The national economic policy framework to promote socio-economic development in Zimbabwe', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg.

Nadeem, M., Hayat, M.A. & Nazir, R., 2014, *Exploring interlinks between globalisation and governance: A panel data evidence*, viewed 06 March 2020, from https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/61337/1/MPRA_paper_61337.pdf.

Nhlapo, T.M.S., 2020, 'Human resource development strategy for gender equality within the Department of Correctional Services', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg.

Nyikadzino, T. & Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2020, 'The devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities in post-independent Zimbabwe', *African Renaissance* 17(1), 233–251. https://doi.org/10.31920/2516-5305/2020/17n1a11

Obi, C., 2015, *Repositioning South Africa in global economic governance: a perspective from Nigeria*, viewed 20 October 2022, from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10220461.2015.1054305.

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, 2021, *Brazil economic snapshot*, viewed 03 February 2022, from https://www.oecd.org/economy/brazil-economic-snapshot/.

Parízek, M. & Stephen, M.D., 2018, *The representation of BRICS in global economic governance: Reform and fragmentation of multilateral institutions*, viewed 19 March 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Michal_Parizek/publication/327350512_The_Representation_of_BRICS_in_Global_Economic_Governance_Reform_and_Fragmentation_of_Multilateral_Institutions/.

Petropoulos, S., 2013, *The emergence of the BRICS – Implications for global governance*, viewed 08 March 2020, from https://www.lindenwood.edu/files/resources/37-51.pdf.

Qoraboyev, I., 2021, 'Global governance', in K. De Feyter, G.E. Turkeli & S. De Moerloose (eds.), *Law and development encyclopedia*, pp. 99–103, Edward Elgar, Northampton.

Radulescua, I.G., Panaita, M. & Voica, C., 2014, 'BRICS countries challenge to the world economy new trends', *Procedia Economics and Finance* 8, 605–613. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(14)00135-X

Rapkin, D.P., Strand, J.R. & Trevathan, M.W., 2016, 'Representation and governance in international organisations', *Politics and Governance* 4(3), 77–89. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v4i3.544

Roen, T.A., 2011, 'Changes in global governance: The case of the G20', Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.

Smith, C., 2019, *BRICS bank to up its lending to SA, plans to issue rand bonds*, viewed 19 March 2020, from https://www.fin24.com/Economy/brics-bank-to-up-its-lending-to-sa-plans-to-issue-rand-bonds-20190402.

Social Watch, 2020, *Uruguay or dystopia? The sustainable development goals in Brazil and in the world*, Social Watch Secretariat, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Standard Bank South Africa, 2022, *Russia: Economic and political outline*, viewed 21 January 2022, from https://www.tradeclub.standardbank.com/portal/en/market-potential/russia/economical-context?clear_s=y#.

Statista Research Department, 2021, *Key socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 pandemic in Russia 2021*, viewed 02 February 2022, from https://www.statista.com/statistics/1230034/covid-19-pandemic-socio-economic-consequences-russia/.

Stephen, M.D. & Parízek, M., 2019, 'New powers and the distribution of preferences in global trade governance: From deadlock and drift to fragmentation', *New Political Economy* 24(6), 735–758. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2018.1509065

te Velde, D.W. & Keane, J., 2011, *The new landscape of global economic governance: Strengthening the role of emerging economies*, Overseas Development Institute, London.

The Conversation, 2021, *How the pandemic has changed China's economy – Perhaps for good*, viewed 24 January 2022, from https://theconversation.com/how-the-pandemic-has-changed-chinas-economy-perhaps-for-good-167597.

The Economist, 2014, *Japan's pension giant: Risk on*, 15 March, viewed 11 June 2022, from https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2014/03/15/risk-on.

The World Bank, 2021a, *Overview*, viewed 02 February 2022, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil/overview#1.

The World Bank, 2021b, *South Africa economic update: South Africa's labor market can benefit from young entrepreneurs, self-employment*, viewed 02 February 2022, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/publication/south-africa-economic-update-south-africa-s-labor-market-can-benefit-from-young-entrepreneurs-self-employment.

Tian, X., Sarkis, J., Geng, Y., Bleischwitz, R., Qian, Y., Xu, L. et al., 2020, *Examining the role of BRICS countries at the global economic and environmental resources nexus*, viewed 24 July 2021, from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479720302656. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2020.110330

UK Essays, 2020, *Globalisation and global governance*, viewed 24 March 2020, from https://www.ukessays.com/essays/politics/globalization-and-global-governance-politics-essay.php.

United Nations, 2014, *Global governance and global rules for development in the post-2015 era*, United Nations Publications, New York.

Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2011, 'Paradigm shift from new public administration to new public management: Theory and practice in Africa', *Td the Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 7(2), 235–250. https://doi.org/10.4102/td.v7i2.240

Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2021, 'Global governance reforms to achieve sustainable development goal one (no poverty) in BRICS', *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review* 9(1), a545. https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v9i1.545

Vyas-Doorgapersad, S. & Aktan, C., 2017, 'Changing world and changing state: Rethinking the roles of the state', *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies* 9(2), 80–94.

Wilson, R., 2007, *How Wal-Mart is (mis)shaping the global economy*, viewed 11 June 2022, from https://www.aft.org/periodical/american-educator/spring-2007/how-wal-mart-misshaping-global-economy.

World Economic Forum, 2020, *3 Obstacles that stand in the way of the UN's sustainable development goals*, viewed 28 March 2020, from https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/09/3-obstacles-that-stand-in-the-way-of-the-un-s-sustainable-development-goals/.

Yifan, D., 2018, *How will the BRICS lead the global economy?*, viewed 25 July 2021, from https://www.chinausfocus.com/finance-economy/how-will-the-brics-lead-the-global-economy.