

The Role of BRICS Cooperation: A Study on Economics and Geopolitical Impact of Indonesian Membership

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Abstract

This study examines Indonesia's membership in BRICS, focusing on its economic and geopolitical implications. It explores how cooperation within the BRICS framework can enhance trade, investment, and strategic partnerships, while positioning Indonesia as a key player in regional and global economic governance. With shifting global power dynamics and growing interest in emerging market alliances, understanding Indonesia's role in BRICS is critical for shaping its economic strategy and geopolitical influence. The study primarily analyses macroeconomic indicators, trade flows, and policy frameworks related to Indonesia's BRICS engagement, though it does not provide in-depth sectoral case studies or evaluate domestic political implications in detail. Key research questions addressed include how does Indonesia's BRICS membership affect its trade and investment opportunities? What are the geopolitical benefits and challenges associated with this alliance? Using a qualitative and policy-analytical approach, the study draws on trade data, economic reports, and geopolitical literature. Comparative analysis with other BRICS member states evaluates Indonesia's strategic positioning and the potential economic and diplomatic outcomes of its engagement. The findings suggest that BRICS membership offers Indonesia significant opportunities for trade expansion, investment inflows, and enhanced geopolitical influence, contingent on effective strategic and diplomatic engagement. Future research may examine sector-specific impacts, regional integration strategies, and Indonesia's role in shaping BRICS policy frameworks to maximise economic and political benefits.

Keywords

BRICS, Indonesia, Geopolitics, Economic Cooperation, Emerging Markets

Introduction

Indonesia's rise as a key player in Southeast Asia and globally is highlighted by its recent decision to join BRICS. This move reflects Indonesia's rising economic status and strategic geopolitical ambitions. Indonesia, the largest economy in Southeast Asia, showed strong growth with a GDP of around USD 1.2 trillion in 2023, achieving a 5.3% growth rate amid global economic uncertainties (Yuniarto *et al.*, 2024). Indonesia's economic resilience, emerging middle class, and youthful demographic make it a key market and player in regional stability.

The BRICS coalition, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, represents a formidable bloc of emerging economies, collectively accounting for over 40% of the world's population and approximately 25% of global GDP (Armijo & Roberts, 2014). BRICS is significant not just for its economic power but also for its potential to transform global trade and investment. Indonesia joins BRICS to boost trade relations and attract foreign investments, especially from other BRICS nations eyeing Southeast Asia for growth.

Indonesia's BRICS membership significantly impacts geopolitical dynamics, as it reflects a challenge to Western influence and highlights emerging economies' desire for greater representation in global affairs (Siddiqui, 2024). Indonesia's participation in BRICS strategically aims to enhance its global influence and promote a multipolar world that represents developing nations' interests. This aligns with Indonesia's long-standing principles of active non-alignment and constructive engagement, increasingly relevant in today's geopolitics. (Djumala *et al.*, 2022).

Indonesia's BRICS membership is vital for regional financial stability and economic growth. As a key Southeast Asian economy, Indonesia can greatly benefit from collaborating with BRICS members—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—to boost its GDP. According to Maulana and Azis (2025), BRICS countries have shown strong economic performance, and Indonesia's inclusion could boost its economy, especially in trade and investment. And Indonesia's accession to BRICS may lead to increased trade and investment inflows. Syamsudin (2025) emphasises that Indonesia's strategic position within BRICS can attract investments that are crucial for infrastructure development. For the diplomatic relationships, Indonesia can engage in strategic dialogues that align with its national interests while contributing to a more balanced global political landscape (Lee *et al.*, 2025). Aleksia and Bakhtiar (2023) argue that BRICS serves as a counterbalance to Western-dominated financial institutions, allowing Indonesia to advocate for reforms that support developing nations. Also, as highlighted by Yuniar (2025), this membership aligns with Indonesia's aspirations for sustainable development and equitable trade practices, reinforcing the importance of its participation in this influential bloc.

This seeks to explore the economic and geopolitical consequences of Indonesia joining BRICS. Indonesia can enhance its role in regional and global affairs through this cooperation, promoting sustainable development and economic growth. Policymakers must understand these dynamics to fully leverage this alliance. As highlighted by Zubaidi (2024), Indonesia's membership could significantly enhance its influence in global markets, fostering trade and investment opportunities.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the economic and geopolitical ramifications of Indonesia's accession to BRICS. The primary research questions explored include how does Indonesia's BRICS membership affect its trade and investment opportunities? What are the geopolitical benefits and challenges associated with this alliance?

Indonesia's entry into BRICS not only signifies its economic ambitions but also its strategic intent to play a pivotal role in reshaping global governance. As the world witnesses a transition towards a more multipolar order, Indonesia's integration into this influential bloc could enhance its geopolitical leverage and economic prospects while also contributing to the broader vision of equitable global development.

Literature review

BRICS was established as a counterbalance to Western-dominated institutions, aiming to reform global economic governance to better reflect the interests of emerging economies. Larionova and Shelepov (2022) articulate that BRICS seeks to enhance the representation of emerging economies in global decision-making processes, particularly within institutions like the G20. The group's objectives include promoting sustainable development, fostering economic cooperation, and advocating for a multipolar world order. This aligns with Armijo and Roberts (2014), who argue that BRICS plays a pivotal role in reshaping the dynamics of global governance by introducing alternative perspectives and priorities that challenge traditional Western hegemony.

The influence of BRICS on global economic governance is significant, as it consolidates the collective power of its members to negotiate and advocate for reforms in international financial institutions. The literature indicates that BRICS has been instrumental in pushing for changes that address the needs of developing nations, thus enhancing its legitimacy and authority on the global stage. Vom Hau *et al.* (2012) highlight that the strategies employed by BRICS extend beyond economic collaboration to include diplomatic and developmental initiatives that seek to reshape the global political landscape.

Each BRICS member employs distinct economic and geopolitical strategies that reflect their national interests and regional contexts (Armia, 2020). Antony (2023) discusses the diversification of BRICS, noting how individual countries leverage their unique strengths to influence global economic trends. For instance, China's Belt and Road Initiative exemplifies its strategy to expand its influence through infrastructure investment, while India focuses on digital technology and innovation as key drivers of its growth. This diversity within BRICS not only enriches the group's collective strategy but also poses challenges in achieving consensus on various issues.

Parfinenko (2020) discusses how the international economic integration of BRICS countries serves as a catalyst for regional and global growth, emphasising the importance of collaborative trade practices. Prabhakar *et al.* (2015) introduce a new paradigm linking foreign direct investment (FDI),

trade, and economic growth within the BRICS framework, suggesting that enhanced investment flows can stimulate economic activity across member states.

Yasin and Esquivias (2023) explore the spillover effects of FDI on Indonesia's manufacturing exports and imports, indicating that foreign investment significantly influences domestic trade dynamics. Todo and Miyamoto (2006) provide evidence of knowledge spillovers from FDI, underscoring the critical role of local R&D activities in fostering industrial development in Indonesia.

BRICS influences geopolitical implications, focusing on regional role, diplomatic cooperation, and strategic partnerships among its member states. Jayan (2012) discusses how BRICS advances cooperation and strengthens regionalism, and Christensen & Xing (2016) explores the responses of emerging powers and markets in a global context.

In conclusion, the literature reviewed underscores the importance of BRICS in global economic governance and highlights the diverse strategies of its members. The formation and objectives of BRICS reflect a concerted effort to establish a more equitable global order, while the individual strategies of its members illustrate the complexities and dynamism inherent in the group's collective influence.

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative approach to explore the significance of Indonesia's membership in BRICS. Joining BRICS is essential for fostering economic growth, enhancing geopolitical influence, and linking emerging economic communities. The study combines policy analysis, a literature review, and comparative case studies of other BRICS nations, creating a comprehensive framework to understand the challenges and opportunities arising from the government's efforts to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through fiscal initiatives. The methodology aims to capture detailed insights into the macroeconomic and geopolitical dynamics at play.

A comprehensive literature review and bibliographic analysis were conducted to emphasise economic data and geopolitical studies pertinent to Indonesia and BRICS. These approaches examine economic and geopolitical frameworks and the critical role of foreign policy interventions in emerging economies. Additionally, policy analyses were conducted to evaluate Indonesia's diverse economic landscape.

The analysis highlights the policy frameworks and diplomatic strategies related to BRICS cooperation. Consequently, maintaining a comparative position with other BRICS members is essential for ensuring the sustainable growth of Indonesia's economy. By integrating qualitative secondary data with an understanding of the region's socioeconomic context and geopolitical dynamics, the research offers actionable insights to enhance Indonesian foreign policies, ultimately bolstering global influence and fostering economic development and resilience.

Result and Discussion

Economic Opportunities and Geopolitical Benefits

Indonesia's accession to BRICS presents significant potential for trade expansion, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows, and technology exchange. As a member of this influential group comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, Indonesia can leverage its strategic position within the global economy. The BRICS nations collectively represent over 40% of the world's population and nearly a quarter of global GDP, making them a formidable market for Indonesian exports. According to Soomro *et al.* (2022), there is a dynamic relationship between FDI, information and communication technology (ICT), trade openness, and economic growth in BRICS countries, which Indonesia can tap into by enhancing its trade relations with these economies.

The potential for increased FDI is substantial. Banday *et al.* (2021) highlight that BRICS countries have been pivotal in driving FDI flows within the group, which has, in turn, stimulated economic growth. For Indonesia, this could mean an influx of capital and expertise in various sectors, particularly in infrastructure, manufacturing, and digital technology. The Indonesian government has been actively promoting its investment climate, and joining BRICS could further enhance its attractiveness to foreign investors looking for new opportunities in Southeast Asia.

Technology exchange represents a crucial opportunity for Indonesia. The BRICS nations are leaders in technological innovation across various fields, including renewable energy, agriculture, and digital technology. By partnering with these countries, Indonesia can enhance its own technological capabilities through knowledge sharing and the adoption of best practices. For example, collaborating on renewable energy technologies could help Indonesia meet its ambitious climate objectives while attracting investment in sustainable initiatives.

Indonesia's integration into BRICS is likely to yield significant sectoral benefits, particularly in agriculture, energy, and digital technology. The agricultural sector, which employs a significant portion of the Indonesian workforce, stands to gain from enhanced cooperation with BRICS nations, particularly Brazil and Russia, which are known for their agricultural prowess. The exchange of agricultural technologies and practices could lead to improved productivity and sustainability in Indonesia's farming sector, addressing food security concerns while also increasing export potential (Armia, 2024).

In the energy sector, Indonesia can benefit from partnerships with BRICS countries that are investing heavily in renewable energy technologies. China and India, for instance, are leaders in solar and wind energy development. By collaborating with these nations, Indonesia could accelerate its transition to renewable energy sources, thus reducing its carbon footprint and meeting international climate commitments. As noted by Rahmatulummah *et al.* (2025), the

collaboration between BRICS countries can facilitate knowledge sharing and investment in green technologies, which is critical for Indonesia's sustainable development.

The digital technology sector offers significant opportunities for Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy. Its expanding digital economy in e-commerce, fintech, and telecommunications aligns with BRICS nations' expertise. This collaboration can enhance connectivity and infrastructure, fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic diversification in Indonesia.

Joining BRICS is poised to enhance Indonesia's regional influence and global strategic positioning significantly. As a member of this influential bloc, Indonesia can assert itself as a key player in shaping the geopolitical landscape of the Asia-Pacific region. The collective strength of BRICS nations provides Indonesia with a platform to voice its interests and concerns on global issues, such as trade, climate change, and security. According to Rachman (2025), the collective strategy of BRICS in facing Western domination aligns with Indonesia's aspirations to maintain its sovereignty and promote a multipolar world order.

Indonesia's strategic location in Southeast Asia allows it to act as a bridge between BRICS nations and other countries in the region. This unique position can facilitate greater cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, and cultural exchange. By enhancing its diplomatic engagement with BRICS countries, Indonesia can strengthen its role as a regional leader and advocate for the interests of developing nations in global forums.

Indonesia's BRICS membership offers a strategic advantage as geopolitical dynamics in the Asia-Pacific shift. Amid rising tensions between major powers, Indonesia can act as a mediator among BRICS nations and regional counterparts, enhancing its soft power and promoting stability for economic growth.

Indonesia's engagement with BRICS can lead to increased cooperation in security matters, particularly in combating transnational threats such as terrorism and cybercrime. Collaborative efforts in these areas can enhance Indonesia's national security while also contributing to regional peace and stability. As Solehudin (2023) points out, Indonesia's geostrategic position in global and regional politics makes it a critical player in addressing contemporary security challenges.

Strategic and Implications Challenges

Indonesia's potential membership in BRICS presents a significant opportunity to enhance its domestic economic policies. By aligning with this coalition of emerging economies, Indonesia can gain access to a broader market and increased foreign investment. As noted by Afridi *et al.* (2025), the BRICS nations collectively represent over 40% of the global population and significant shares of global GDP, which could provide Indonesia with a platform to diversify its economic partnerships and reduce reliance on traditional Western markets.

Indonesia can leverage BRICS membership to attract investments in critical sectors such as infrastructure and technology. The BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) has been instrumental in financing projects that align with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) across member states. For instance, the NDB has funded renewable energy projects in Brazil and India, which Indonesia could emulate to bolster its own energy transition efforts (Crowley-Vigneau *et al.*, 2024). This financial support could enable Indonesia to implement its ambitious infrastructure plans, thereby stimulating economic growth and job creation.

BRICS membership could help Indonesia enhance its trade policies. By participating in BRICS, Indonesia could negotiate more favourable trade agreements with fellow member states, thereby increasing its exports and improving trade balances. This is particularly crucial given Indonesia's current trade deficit, which has been a persistent issue in its economic landscape (Lee *et al.*, 2024). Access to a larger market through BRICS could facilitate the export of Indonesian goods, including palm oil, textiles, and electronics, thus strengthening its domestic economy.

Indonesia could benefit from knowledge sharing and technology transfer among BRICS nations. Collaborative initiatives in areas such as agriculture, digital economy, and sustainable practices could enhance Indonesia's productivity and innovation capabilities. For example, Brazil's advancements in agricultural technology could be adapted to improve Indonesia's agricultural output, which is vital for food security (Pulungan, 2024). This synergy could lead to a more resilient economy capable of withstanding global economic shocks.

The role of BRICS in promoting sustainable development is pivotal, particularly for Indonesia as it grapples with environmental challenges (Armia, 2024). The BRICS nations have emphasised sustainable development as a core principle, and Indonesia's membership could enhance its commitment to these goals. According to Rogozhina (2025), BRICS has established various platforms to facilitate cooperation in environmental and social governance, which Indonesia can actively participate in to advance its sustainability agenda.

One of the significant initiatives within BRICS is the focus on renewable energy and climate change mitigation. Indonesia, being one of the largest greenhouse gas emitters in Southeast Asia, stands to benefit from collaborative efforts in clean energy development. The NDB's support for green projects can help Indonesia transition to renewable energy sources, thus contributing to its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement (Afridi *et al.*, 2025). This alignment with global sustainability initiatives could bolster Indonesia's international reputation and attract environmentally conscious investors.

BRICS provides a platform for Indonesia to engage in regional cooperation on environmental issues. As a member, Indonesia could collaborate with other BRICS nations on transboundary environmental challenges, such as deforestation and biodiversity loss. The sharing of best practices and technologies in conservation efforts can enhance Indonesia's capacity to manage its rich natural resources sustainably (Lee *et al.*, 2024).

BRICS can assist Indonesia in developing its green economy, which is crucial for long-term economic resilience. The integration of sustainable practices into various sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, and tourism, can create new economic opportunities while preserving the environment. For example, Indonesia could learn from India's successful implementation of sustainable agricultural practices, which have improved food security and farmer incomes (Pulungan, 2024).

Joining BRICS presents Indonesia with several diplomatic challenges that necessitate coordinated policy approaches. One of the primary challenges is balancing its relationships with existing partners, particularly Western nations (Armia, 2022). Indonesia has traditionally maintained a non-aligned foreign policy, and aligning with BRICS could lead to tensions with countries that view the bloc as a counterweight to Western influence (Crowley-Vigneau *et al.*, 2024).

The diversity of political systems and economic interests within BRICS can complicate Indonesia's diplomatic efforts. Each member state has its priorities, which may not always align with Indonesia's national interests. For instance, while Indonesia may seek to enhance trade relations, other BRICS members might prioritise geopolitical considerations over economic cooperation (Lee *et al.*, 2024). This divergence could hinder Indonesia's ability to advocate for its interests effectively within the bloc.

To address these challenges, Indonesia must adopt a proactive diplomatic strategy that promotes dialogue and consensus-building among BRICS members. Engaging in multilateral discussions and fostering bilateral relations with key partners within the bloc can enhance Indonesia's influence and ensure that its priorities are adequately represented (Rogozhina, 2025).

Additionally, Indonesia should focus on developing a coherent policy framework that aligns its domestic goals with BRICS' collective objectives (Armia, 2021). This involves coordinating efforts across various sectors, including trade, investment, and sustainable development, to present a unified stance in negotiations. Such an approach can enhance Indonesia's credibility and strengthen its position within BRICS.

Indonesian Geopolitical Role in the Global South

The Global South, encompassing a diverse range of countries primarily in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia, is grappling with numerous contemporary issues that significantly influence its geopolitical landscape. These challenges include economic disparities, political instability, and climate change, which collectively hinder sustainable development (Armia, 2020). According to Zhou (2024), the rise of the Global South is characterised by a quest for greater autonomy in international affairs, as these nations seek to redefine their roles within the global order. This shift is increasingly relevant in the context of Indonesia's recent accession to BRICS, a bloc that aims to enhance cooperation among emerging economies.

Economic inequality remains a pressing issue within the Global South, where nations struggle with the legacies of colonialism and unequal trade relationships. For instance, many countries in this group are heavily reliant on commodity exports, making them vulnerable to global market fluctuations. Haryono *et al.* (2024) highlight that BRICS offers a platform for these nations to collectively address such economic vulnerabilities, thereby fostering a more equitable global economic governance. This is particularly pertinent for Indonesia, which, as the largest economy in Southeast Asia, has the potential to lead initiatives that promote fair trade practices and investment flows.

Political instability also poses significant challenges for the Global South. In many regions, governance issues, corruption, and conflict undermine development efforts. The BRICS framework allows member states, including Indonesia, to engage in dialogue and share best practices for governance and stability. Kunkunrat (2023) notes that Indonesia's experience in democratic transition and its relatively stable political environment can serve as a model for other Global South nations facing similar challenges. By leveraging its BRICS membership, Indonesia can advocate for policies that prioritise democratic governance and human rights within the bloc.

Climate change is another critical issue that disproportionately affects Global South countries, which often lack the resources to effectively combat its impacts. The BRICS nations, through collaborative efforts, can address climate-related challenges by promoting sustainable development initiatives. Indonesia, with its rich biodiversity and significant contributions to global carbon emissions, stands to benefit from BRICS-led environmental policies that prioritise sustainable practices. Zhou (2024) emphasises the importance of solidarity among Global South nations in tackling such pressing issues, suggesting that Indonesia's role within BRICS can amplify these efforts.

Indonesia's recent accession to BRICS represents a significant opportunity for the nation to enhance its geopolitical influence within the Global South. As the largest economy in Southeast Asia, Indonesia is well-placed to leverage its membership to advocate for the interests of developing nations in various international forums. Kunkunrat (2023) posits that Indonesia's strategic location and economic prowess can serve as a catalyst for fostering regional cooperation among Global South countries, particularly in areas such as trade, investment, and technology transfer.

One of the key advantages of Indonesia's BRICS membership is the potential for enhanced economic collaboration with other member states. By engaging in trade agreements and investment initiatives within the BRICS framework, Indonesia can stimulate economic growth not only for itself but also for other developing nations. Haryono *et al.* (2024) argue that such collaborations can lead to shared prosperity, as member states work together to create a more balanced and inclusive global economic system. For instance, Indonesia could facilitate

partnerships in sectors such as renewable energy and agriculture, which are crucial for sustainable development in the Global South.

Moreover, Indonesia's role in BRICS can extend beyond economic collaboration to encompass diplomatic initiatives that promote peace and stability in the region. As a member of BRICS, Indonesia can advocate for peaceful conflict resolution and support initiatives aimed at strengthening governance in member states. Kunkunrat (2023) highlights Indonesia's historical commitment to non-alignment and peaceful diplomacy, suggesting that these principles can guide its actions within BRICS, fostering a culture of cooperation among Global South nations.

Additionally, Indonesia's participation in BRICS can enhance its capacity to address global challenges such as climate change and health crises. By collaborating with other member states, Indonesia can contribute to the development of comprehensive strategies that address these pressing issues. Zhou (2024) notes that the collective efforts of BRICS nations can lead to more effective responses to global challenges, thereby benefiting all member states and reinforcing Indonesia's leadership role within the Global South.

Fiscal policy in Indonesia has played a crucial role in shaping the landscape for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The government's interventions, particularly during economic downturns, have been aimed at fostering SME growth and enhancing their financial resilience. For instance, post-pandemic recovery strategies, as highlighted by Sugihartini and Hendrian (2025), included targeted fiscal measures that provided financial support and incentives specifically designed for SMEs, which are vital for the country's economic fabric. These interventions have been instrumental in stabilising SMEs, which constitute approximately 99% of all businesses in Indonesia, thereby contributing significantly to employment and economic output.

Conclusion

Indonesia's accession to BRICS represents a critical turning point in both its economic trajectory and its geopolitical positioning. The findings of this study demonstrate that BRICS membership offers Indonesia substantial opportunities for economic expansion and global influence. By aligning with one of the most influential blocs of emerging economies, Indonesia is positioned to gain significant advantages in trade, investment, and technological exchange. The economic potential lies not only in greater access to markets but also in attracting foreign direct investment that can stimulate industrial growth and infrastructure development. At the same time, the geopolitical implications are profound, as Indonesia can now leverage BRICS to enhance its diplomatic weight, advocate for reforms in global governance, and strengthen its voice in shaping a multipolar international order.

However, the analysis underscores that such opportunities cannot be realised automatically. Strategic engagement and deliberate policy alignment are necessary if Indonesia is to maximise the benefits of its membership. The research highlights that Indonesia must coordinate its

economic and foreign policy to ensure that BRICS participation advances national development goals. For instance, deeper integration in trade and investment frameworks requires Indonesia to harmonise domestic policies with the collective objectives of BRICS, while also maintaining flexibility to safeguard its national interests. Similarly, on the geopolitical front, Indonesia needs to engage proactively in diplomatic dialogues, positioning itself not only as a participant but also as a thought leader that can bridge the interests of BRICS with those of the wider Global South.

The policy implications are clear. Indonesia's government should adopt a proactive stance that leverages BRICS as both an economic and diplomatic platform. Aligning fiscal, trade, and industrial policies with BRICS cooperation agendas can unlock access to capital, technology, and larger export markets. Furthermore, Indonesia should strengthen its diplomatic apparatus to engage in consensus-building within BRICS, ensuring that its priorities are adequately represented despite the diverse political and economic interests of other member states. In doing so, Indonesia can simultaneously uphold its long-standing principle of non-alignment while reinforcing its commitment to a multipolar and equitable international order.

Looking forward, future research must build on this study by examining the sector-specific impacts of BRICS engagement on Indonesia's economy. A closer analysis of critical sectors such as energy, agriculture, and digital technology will shed light on the areas where Indonesia stands to benefit most from collaboration. Additionally, Indonesia's role in shaping BRICS policy frameworks deserves careful study, particularly as the bloc increasingly focuses on sustainable development and financial integration. Empirical research into trade performance, investment outcomes, and diplomatic influence will provide valuable insights into the tangible benefits and challenges of membership.

In conclusion, Indonesia's membership in BRICS is both an opportunity and a challenge. With effective strategic engagement, alignment of domestic and foreign policy, and proactive participation in shaping the bloc's agenda, Indonesia can transform its membership into a driver of economic resilience, diplomatic influence, and sustainable growth. The path forward requires vision, adaptability, and a commitment to harnessing the collective power of BRICS for national and global benefit.

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