Abstract
This article aims to present briefly some features of the recent expansion process of higher education in Brazil, India and China (three BRIC countries, a group composed by Brazil, Russia, India and China) from the concepts of functional differentiation, inclusion and exclusion of social systems theory. The article shows that these countries are expanding their higher education systems more than the global average; however, still have low levels of access to higher education compared with developed countries. The article concludes that despite the recent strong higher expansion, it is still one of the main factors for the continued economic development in these countries.

Keywords