Painting the World Crimson: The Global Spread of Graduate Management Education as Facilitated by Harvard Business School

Keshav Krishnamurty

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PAINTING THE WORLD CRIMSON: THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF GRADUATE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AS FACILITATED BY HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

A Dissertation Presented

by

KESHAV KRISHNAMURTY

Presented to the Office of Graduate Studies,
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PAINTING THE WORLD CRIMSON: THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF GRADUATE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AS FACILITATED BY HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

PAINTING THE WORLD CRIMSON: THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF GRADUATE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AS FACILITATED BY HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

May 2020

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The growth and spread of business education worldwide is a phenomenon of contemporary interest, because it has enabled the expansion of a global managerial class that operates as social and economic elites worldwide in a time of growing inequality. I take a historic approach to this contemporary phenomenon by examining the role that Harvard Business School (HBS) played in the 1950s and 1960s in the conceptualization and launch of the now very prominent Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Ahmedabad. Using the archival materials at the Special Collections of the Baker Library at Harvard Business School, my research uncovers which players were involved, how they communicated, their concerns, the context in which they were operating, and how they constructed themselves as
influential and advanced institutional interests. In my first paper, I examine whether and how meritocracy is invoked or implied as a legitimating aim for elite business education. I use actor-network theory, which I show is well suited for tracing the flows of people and ideas, to track meritocracy, arguing that it is a “non-corporeal actant” that itself moves and changes across international players, settings, and moments. In my second paper, I bring a critical perspective to archives and how they are populated, considering the self-legitimation project as HBS steps into a global role in the spread of graduate management education. I examine the signaling moves in the saved correspondence, in terms of personal connections, decision points, explicitly stated interests, status markers or judgments of others, and reference to competitor institutions. I find that the web of connections among elites is intertwined with Cold War political considerations of HBS administrators. My third paper is an ethnographic case study of the physical spaces, rituals, and processes of the archive at Baker Library and how these serve to legitimate HBS to itself, while using the experience of visiting the archives at MIT containing records of the role of the MIT Sloan School in the formation of the IIM in Calcutta as a comparison. Overall, my dissertation explores an important historic moment when HBS helped set the stage for a global managerial elite.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The growth and spread of business education worldwide is a phenomenon of contemporary interest. Management education is now increasingly based on models developed within the United States, and spread by a growing number of business schools across the world. These institutions attract students who wish to belong to a global managerial class, a class whose more highly placed members operate as social and economic elites worldwide. The growth of business education, like that of elite higher education in general, has served to legitimize and reproduce existing social and economic arrangements (Subramanian, 2015; Warikoo, 2018; White et al., 2017) and has led to growing inequality as those who have opportunities to join the higher echelons of the global managerial class gain access to social and material rewards and benefits that grow increasingly scarce for those who do not.

Although the growth of management education is widely perceived by the general public as being “in the ether”, as though it were almost fated or inevitable, or in some sense a natural phenomenon, I choose to follow the lead of scholarship that has investigated the
planned and deliberate diffusion of management education globally. Scholarship on the
diffusion of business practices and ideas, both within business education and among global
business enterprises is relatively plentiful; it is also more often focused on ongoing or recent
developments in the field than on historical events or developments that led to present
conditions.

I choose to take a historic approach to this contemporary phenomenon because I seek
to investigate its early beginnings, which are relatively little studied and potentially offer
greater room for understanding how and why management education has attained its current
state of prominence. I seek to uncover new information and reassemble existing information
in order to further our present understanding of how global management education
developed; to better understand the current system of education that promotes the role of
business executives as a socioeconomic elite as the deliberate product of human action and
*one possible system* of global education rather than as *the only possible system* of education
brought about by an inevitable free-market, neoliberal “end of history”.

Scholarship has already revealed how, beginning largely within the United States and
spreading internationally, various players developed elite business education and promoted it
in order to spread the meanings and norms surrounding the role of business executives as a
socioeconomic elite(Khurana, 2007; Khurana & Penrice, 2011). Scholars have largely
focused on the role of the founders of elite business institutions, for example the case of the
Wharton School(Sass, 1982), or in the role of philanthropic foundations such as the Ford
Foundation in the spread of management education both within America and
internationally (Berman, 1983; Khurana, Kimura, & Fourcade, 2011; Parmar, 2011). I seek to add greater understanding by exploring an additional dimension – the potential role of business schools in directly influencing the growth of management education worldwide.

I choose to examine the role that Harvard Business School (HBS) played in the 1950s and 1960s in the conceptualization and launch of the now very prominent Indian Institute of Management (IIM) at Ahmedabad. HBS, founded in 1908, has been highly influential in the field of global business education and has brought significant change to the development of business education both on its own as well as in association with foundations like the aforementioned Ford Foundation and business consultants such as McKinsey (Khurana, 2007; McDonald, 2017). IIM Ahmedabad, founded in 1961, is among the highest rated of the IIMs, which in turn constitute many of the most highly rated business schools in India – graduates of IIM Ahmedabad have significant social and economic opportunities within India and compete globally with graduates of top business schools from around the world for the same high corporate positions (Annabhai, 2011).

Understanding if and how HBS influenced the growth and the standing of IIM Ahmedabad would add to our understanding of how the seeds for the growth of the current global managerial elite were spread; through a deep dive into archival material at the Special Collections of the Baker Library at HBS, I seek to add a more nuanced understanding of these developments by attempting to disentangle the role and contributions of HBS proper from that of the Ford Foundation, which was also involved with IIM Ahmedabad. I explore the possibilities that HBS had its own interests and desires and that HBS’s administrators
may have acted to further its standing, legitimacy and global influence through the growth of international business education.

My dissertation is comprised of three interconnected papers exploring the role of Harvard Business School in the global spread of graduate management education. In my first paper, I examine whether and how meritocracy is invoked or implied as a legitimating aim for elite business education. Meritocracy is a social system in which merit or talent is the basis for sorting people into positions and distributing rewards such that people in positions of greatest authority are occupied by those having the most merit (Scully, 1997). It has been used to legitimate elite status as well as reproduce inequitable social arrangements (McCoy & Major, 2007; Mijs, 2009; Scully, 2002). In recent years, meritocracy has become a topic of increasing interest, with papers examining its effects on a broad variety of subjects such as perceived income inequality (Mijs, 2018; Roex, Huijts, & Sieben, 2019), social class achievement within education (Darnon, Wiederkehr, Dompnier, & Martinot, 2018; White et al., 2017), and gender and racial inequality (Soares, 2017; Warikoo, 2017, 2018).

In order to track meritocracy, I use Actor-Network Theory (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Law, 1992), described as a body of theoretical and empirical writing that treats social relations, such as power and organization, as the outcome of interactions of actors in a network (Hartt, 2018). An actor is defined as an entity, even one without physical existence, that makes a perceptible influence by making others be (Law & Mol, 2008). Under this approach, society itself is studied as a collection of human and non-human, even non-living and abstract actors in a complex network of changing relationships, which are unraveled
and/or traced through networks of connection (Wheeler, 2010). I show that this approach is well suited for tracing the flows of people and ideas, arguing that meritocracy emerges from these interactions as a “non-corporeal actant” (Hartt, 2013; Hartt, Mills, Helms Mills, & Corrigan, 2014) that itself moves and changes across international players, settings, and moments.

By demonstrating that the idea of meritocracy, which has been institutionalized as a process in business education on one hand but has been understood and enacted differently by different actors at different points in time – from, for instance, Jefferson enacting it through his writings and speeches in the form of “natural aristocracy” across America’s political scene to justify inequality to 18th century Harvard students justifying their relative social standing based on their examination grades, to its varied 20th century applications – I show that the idea of meritocracy is itself subjective and dependent on interpretation by groups or even individuals and changing its nature depending on the relationship between the ‘judges’ and the ‘judged’. I use this case to suggest that it might be more efficacious for scholars interested in institutional theory to consider the use of actor-network theory and more specifically the construct of the non-corporeal actant. To do so would probably shed greater light on the subjective aspect of how ideas and processes become institutionalized through the interactions between the unique individuals holding them, more so than if they treated them as the more objectively framed “institutions”.

In my second paper, I bring a critical perspective to archives and the materials that they store, considering the idea of self-legitimation. I examine the idea that HBS engaged in
a project of self-legitimation as it stepped into a global role in the spread of graduate management education during the early Cold War era. I undertake a deep study of the archival materials belonging to the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad Records at the Special Collections of the Baker Library at Harvard Business School. I surface correspondence among influential individuals at HBS and the IIM in Ahmedabad, which reveal how they construct themselves as influential as well as how they advance Harvard’s interests as they interpret them. My research discovers the timeline of events, which players were involved, how they communicated, what kinds of concerns they had, and the context in which they took their decisions. In doing so, I aim at advancing a new point of view that contains information not previously revealed in the official record.

I emphasize the various signaling moves in the letters, memoranda and other documents that are saved so carefully and methodically in the archives (itself an interesting move that indicates a sense of self-legitimacy and importance) to uncover the history of events that took place. I reveal overarching themes in terms of personal connections, decision points, explicitly stated interests, status markers or personal judgments of others, and references to competitor institutions. In addition to uncovering greater detail than is available in the official record, I find that the web of connections among elites is intertwined with Cold War political considerations of HBS administrators and is tied in with a strain of American discourse surrounding the importance of India to the United States and its allies during the late Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. In subtexts and asides, these administrators talk about how graduate management education could reinforce free-market capitalism,
industrial development and democracy in a nation whose role was perceived to be crucial in a world that appeared to be under threat of encroachment from dictatorial communism.

Wherever possible, I have included partial or complete transcriptions of the documents cited in my second paper in the appendices.

My third paper is a study of the material projection of legitimation through the nature and symbols of the archives and archival spaces at the Baker Library. After reviewing literature on archives that reveals their symbolic and legitimating functions across history, I conduct a brief ethnographic case study of the physical spaces, rituals, and processes of the archive and how these serve to legitimate HBS to itself, while using the ethnographic experience of visiting the archives at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a comparison.

Overall, my dissertation explores an important historic event and its associated period in the global spread of graduate management education, when it was heavily guided and influenced by HBS. This event took place even as HBS actors made sense of their own role in global management education, elected to save their personal documents in a carefully curated archive, and set the stage for a future global managerial elite in India and beyond.
CHAPTER 2

COMPARING INSTITUTIONAL THEORY AND ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY

THROUGH THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MERITOCRACY

Introduction

Modern institutional theory, which was developed beginning in the late 1970s, following the works of Meyer and Rowan (1977) and Zucker (1977), has since become one of the dominant theories within Organization Studies (E. R. Greenwood, Oliver, Suddaby, & Sahlin, 2013). However, drawing on Suddaby (2010), institutional theory has been stretched beyond its original meaning of studying how organizational structures and processes acquire meaning and continuity beyond their technical goals. Institutions themselves are treated as reified constructs or black boxes; and there is considerable potential for research that tries to examine the potential for institutionalization directly.

Scholars engaged in critical research have historically been unfamiliar with institutional theory and therefore less likely to critique it (Cooper, Ezzamel, & Willmott, 2008). At present, Actor-Network Theory (hereafter ANT) is growing increasingly popular among critical scholars in multiple fields of study, including management and organizational
theory. Although institutional theorists have incorporated elements of ANT into institutional theory to study the process of institutionalization, particularly in the subfield of Scandinavian institutionalism (Boxenbaum & Pedersen, 2009; Scheuer, 2008) (Boxenbaum & Pedersen, 2009; Scheuer, 2008) to address perceived shortcomings, none have directly questioned the need for institutions as a theoretical construct.. (Boxenbaum & Pedersen, 2009; Scheuer, 2008) If institutions are fictions actively created and re-created by actants in an actor-network, as Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) remind us, it may now be relevant and timely to ask whether institutions are a necessary fiction for researchers to use in all cases of institutionalization.

Towards this, I argue in this chapter that ANT and the concept of a Non-Corporeal Actant (hereafter NCA) provide a plausible alternative for understanding the processes of institutionalization and translation, particularly in complex conditions with a wide set of factors. An ANT approach may open the “black box” that addresses unanswered questions surrounding structure and agency in institutional theory.

I provide a brief overview of both institutional theory and ANT and use the example of meritocracy, its development within American business education and spread to Indian business education to compare both theories.
Meritocracy and the Business School

Meritocracy is a social system in which merit or talent is the basis for sorting people into positions and distributing rewards such that people in positions of greatest authority are occupied by those having the most merit (Scully, 1997). It has been used to legitimize elite status as well as reproduce inequitable social arrangements (McCoy & Major, 2007; Mijs, 2009; Scully, 2002). In recent years, meritocracy has become a topic of increasing interest, with papers examining its effects on perceived income inequality (Mijs, 2018; Roex et al., 2019), social class achievement within education (Darnon et al., 2018; White et al., 2017), and gender and racial inequality (Soares, 2017; Warikoo, 2017, 2018). It is associated with the growth of different forms of quantitative evaluation, a general increase in the number of tests faced by school students being sorted into universities, and a greater emphasis on accumulating qualifications and certifications for those seeking to prevail in an increasingly competitive job market, particularly in American business education (Guinier, 2015; Lemann, 1999; Liu, 2011). It is therefore important to understand how meritocracy became entrenched in its present, seemingly all-pervasive form.

Business schools, particularly in America, actively established and spread beliefs about business throughout the 20th century (Huczynski, 1994) along with establishing identities for their students (Khurana & Snook, 2011). American business practices have diffused through globalization (Boxenbaum, 2006; Engwall, 2007), and business schools increasingly adopt American methods and practices (Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005). (Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005) (Antunes & Thomas,
In addition, U.S. philanthropic interests actively funded and promoted American management education to protect U.S. institutional interests abroad (Cooke & Kumar, n.d.). This was in part driven by American business schools actively expanding their practices abroad, rather than the expansion of American business practices being “in the ether” as a vague notion.

The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are excellent examples of this assertion, having been deliberately created in the early 1960s to import American management practices. They are now ostensibly some of the most meritocratic business schools in the world, selecting only one out of fifty applicants. Some measure of their importance can be gauged by the fact that they are the premier business schools in a country that had 3902 business schools in 2014, representing over a quarter of the business degree granting institutions in the world at the time (McDonald, 2017, p. 233). An IIM degree opens opportunities for students from a range of backgrounds (Gupta, Gollakota, & Sreekumar, 2003), propagates the idea of meritocracy within business education, and trains future managers of Indian corporations as a social elite that identifies itself as such. Before explaining how meritocracy came to be institutionalized in India, I examine both relevant theories.

**Institutional Theory**

Institutions are supraorganizational patterns of human activity by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material subsistence (Alford & Friedland, 1991) or shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their
appropriate activities and relationships (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). Institutional arrangements reduce uncertainty and tend to reproduce existing social arrangements (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007), confer legitimacy and prescribe, even proscribe, actions.

**Structure versus Agency**

Structure versus Agency constitutes an important debate among scholars of institutional theory, with continuing arguments regarding the primacy of one over the other.

The first approach emphasizes the role of structure over agency through its focus on institutional logic as defining the meaning of institutions. This grew out of a need to explain organizational homogeneity and continuity within organizational fields (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983) and so focuses on the stability of individual institutions and the limitations of agency (Garud et al., 2007). In this view, institutions are macro-level entities that exist above the organizational level, and presuppose the existence of a higher, ‘field’ level with subordinate and superordinate fields (Lounsbury & Pollack, 2001). Institutional logics are explicitly synonymous with institutions and treated as established entities until they are subject to change; these exist externally of the individuals and entities acting on them (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Institutions encode their principles in scripts, or recurrent patterns of behavior and action, represented and imported into an organization by actors (Barley, 1986; Barley & Tolbert, 1997). Actors represent and import into organizations the meanings and norms of logics that they are exposed to (R. Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih,
Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011) and individuals are not considered to have agency except in situations of ambiguity or times of change(Goodrick & Salancik, 1996; Lounsbury, 2001).

The second approach of institutional entrepreneurship or institutional work emphasizes the agency of individuals to create, maintain, develop, advocate or change institutions(Garud et al., 2007). It is defined as the “activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or transform existing ones”(Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004), as “intelligent, situated institutional action” constituted in the “more or less conscious action of individual and collective actors”(Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), thereby working towards the understanding of processes by which institutions are created, maintained or destroyed(Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011).

Although institutional work moves towards addressing the issues raised by Suddaby(2010), a scholar in institutional theory may find themselves in the position of having to selectively lean towards favoring either structure or agency. Although attempts have been made to resolve this dichotomy –by discussing the “paradox of embedded agency” within organizations(Alford & Friedland, 1991; Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Seo & Creed, 2002; Sewell, 1992), by demonstrating that institutions are inhabited by human actors (Hallet & Ventresca, 2006; Scully & Creed, 1997), or by showing how institutions are embodied in the “dialectic-like interplay between actions, meanings and actors”(Zilber, 2002), the essential dichotomy between the two remains. Other attempts at resolving the issues of agency within institutions disassociate it from individual agency(Abdelnour, Hasselbladh, &
Kallinikos, 2017) by ascribing it to the roles and social positions that actors occupy, which in turn are institutionally engineered, thus making agency a function of structure. Questions surrounding the nature of agency additionally arise in the process of translation.

**Translation of Institutions**

Translation is the process through which an institution can enter a different field, or associated group of organizations (Boxenbaum, 2005; Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). Translation is subdivided into the practices of transposition, or the process through which actors transfer processes across institutional fields and natural boundaries (Sewell, 1992), translation or adapting a foreign context to one’s own organizational field (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Sahlin-Andersson, 1996) and theorization or generalizing translation so it can diffuse within the organizational field (R. Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002; Strang & Meyer, 1993). However, other scholarship suggests that three processes are essentially unified and the translation activity can happen at the level of individual actors (Boxenbaum, 2006; Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005). The author of a case study of the dynamic nature of institutionalization-as-translation (Zilber, 2006) focused on the ideational, while stating that “Further research is still needed to explore the role of agency in translation”. In the following section, I aim to show that the ANT definitions of actor and agency may be able to shed new light.
Actor-Network Theory and after

Actor-Network Theory (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Law, 1992) is a body of theoretical and empirical writing that treats social relations, such as power and organization, as the outcome of actors in a network (Hartt, 2018). To quote Law (1992), “This theory insists that networks are materially heterogeneous and argues that society and organization would not exist if they were simply social” [emphasis mine]. Under this approach, society itself is studied as a collection of human and non-human, even non-living and abstract actors in a complex network of changing relationships, which are unraveled and/or traced through networks of connection (Wheeler, 2010). An actor is not merely an active agent; an entity – even one without physical existence – counts as an actor if it makes a perceptible influence by making others be (Law & Mol, 2008). Agency becomes diffuse within the network, but it is localized post hoc when constructing a narrative by making selected actors detached from their background and standing in for the web of relations that they cover – they are where explanation stops (Callon, 1986). In this sense, the choice of actors and the manner in which they are associated in the text to produce knowledge is also the product of the author of the paper who brings them together, rather than crafting an explanation based on pre-existing categories that are treated as self-evident and independent of the actors in the data. ANT has since been supplanted by “ANT and after” literature as the result of a need to acknowledge complexity and heterogeneity (Law, 1999) and allow it to evolve further (Latour, 1999b).

By treating social relations as network effects, ANT (and after) scholars bypass the entire distinction of structure and agency or the problematic necessity of privileging one over
the other (Latour, 1996, 1999b, 1999a, 2011; Law, 1992; Mol, 2010). Categories and processes – including agency and structure, knowledge and power are treated as outcomes (Law, 1999, p. 3) rather than as clearly defined entities under this approach, and are created anew rather than privileging existing formalized categories. Hartt’s theorization of the Non-Corporeal Actant (Hartt, 2013; Hartt et al., 2014) was based on his application of the Critical Sensemaking literature (Helms Mills, Thurlow, & Mills, 2010; Thurlow & Helms Mills, 2015) to describe the existence of an actor that does not have corporeal existence (for example, an idea, or process, or ideology). Meritocracy can be understood as an NCA. Further, extrapolating from Latour’s statement on power within social relations that it is “…not a property of any one of those elements [human or nonhuman actants] but a chain”, the power of meritocracy as an NCA can be understood by its ability to connect human and nonhuman actors in a specific set of relations (Latour, 1991, p. 110).

One of the features of ANT compared to classical theories of organization is its “flat” ontology that does not privilege human actors above non-human or non-corporeal actants, and which does not draw a distinction between micro-, macro- or meta-levels or analysis. Therefore, a network is not larger than another one, but longer or more intensely connected (Latour, 1991, 1996) and all organizations or societies are simply networks with longer connections of smaller networks within.

Within ANT and after, the idea of translation varies across interpretations (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Law, 1992, 1999) although a more generalized definition might be “the process or the work of making two things that are not the same equivalent” (Law, 1999).
Treating meritocracy as an actant, its translation would therefore be through a chain of actors, each of whom transform the idea deliberately, inadvertently, or a combination of both (Latour, 1986). This has implications for both institutionalization and its translation.

**Institutionalization**

Given the differences between institutional theory and ANT, institutionalizing meritocracy can be seen from two different perspectives.

From the point of view of institutional entrepreneurship, the notion that merit was a reflection of a person’s character or worth, rather than deeds and that it could be used to judge a person’s standing in society began to be institutionalized by institutional entrepreneurs in the 18th century in order to legitimize the continued existence and creation of new elites who supported the growing ideologies of liberalism, democracy and egalitarianism. Much of the objective, technical idea of merit in America emerged directly from the political and social discourse before and during the American Revolution, advanced by thinkers who sought to establish systems that would be able to identify and select elites fit to govern (Carson, 2004, 2007; Kett, 2013; Lemann, 1999), its proponents being American colonists, who were often of a business or mercantile background. These individuals had sought freedom from the existing, classist British colonial government through the invocation of the rhetoric of equality and the equal rights of all men, but chose to remain at the top of a stratified social structure that remained intact throughout the revolution (Brinton, 1965).
Several “founding fathers” of American Independence had labeled themselves “Men of Merit”, with merit being a quality that they possessed and which, if unencumbered by bad fortune, would be displayed in their actions and decisions, and which in turn legitimized the elevation of their status above their supposed equals. This was a form of what Joseph Kett (2013) calls ‘essential merit’, or the quality of merit resting on but not limited to an individual’s visible and notable achievements and performances. Essential merit differs from ‘institutional merit’, which is based on the acquisition and application of exact and specialized knowledge, and which would become an Institutional Logic over the 21st century.

The basic idea of judging, ranking, sorting and anointing individuals on the basis of a set notion of merit is so established as to appear natural, absolute and self-evident, offering no imaginable alternative, making meritocracy as pervasive in practice as one of Alford and Friedland (1991)’s original six institutions of western democracy.

From the ANT standpoint, the institutionalization of meritocracy is more complex and takes into account the interests of individual human actors. For example, Thomas Jefferson’s idea of a “natural aristocracy” based on intelligence, talent and innate virtue was one of the most powerful justifications for inequality within the republic, replacing a system where position granted by birth was replaced by position granted on the basis of ability (Carson, 2007), and Jefferson’s own ideas were opposed or contested by contemporaries such as Alexander Hamilton. The primacy of Jefferson’s “natural aristocracy” was brought about by his ability to enroll other actors from politicians and businessmen to educationists into his network and follow his interests, enrollment being the
ANT term for the process by which an actor brings other actors into their network (Latour, 1986). In addition, the action of individual actors, representing by association business, the government and other human actors whose networks they are part of, removes the need to add complexity to the explanation by identifying field-level actors as institutional theory would necessitate.

During the 19th century and well after the initial establishment of ideas around meritocracy, a few individuals in the field of education would enroll others in order to establish a meritocracy to suit their interests. Charles William Eliot, the president of Harvard from 1869 to 1909 and member of the socially elite Eliot family of Boston, would attempt to interpret the idea of a natural aristocracy in a more egalitarian manner than others by seeking good students rather than the “stupid sons of the rich” and reorganizing Harvard along the lines of a German research university (Karabel, 2005). In this process, Eliot changed not only the organization of Harvard and its ability for students to choose courses of their liking, but also established the infrastructure, the paperwork and the administrative positions required to do so. Also present was a dimension of personal power and influence through social connectedness.

In conjunction with Eliot and involved in the same social circles as him, other reformers such as future MIT President Henry Vethake sought to implement moral philosophy among students with an emphasis on “character” (often used as a synonym for “merit”), emphasizing the connection between a nation’s righteousness and its material prosperity (Sass, 1982). The social connection between such individuals was enabled through
the nonprofit organizations that grew in the United States from the beginning of the 19th century. These organizations emphasized the need for a natural aristocracy and the role of business education (Lagemann, 1999) and allowed leading American businessmen at the time to meet and sponsor reformers like Eliot and Vethake while attempting to build their own legacies. As a result, the Carnegie, Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, which connected businessmen, educators and government officials, were central in the creation of business education as it exists at present (Berman, 1983; Khurana, 2007; Khurana et al., 2011; Lagemann, 1983, 1989, 1999; Sass, 1982; Schlossman, Sedlak, & Wechsler, 1998; Wren, 1983). These organizations placed an emphasis on testable ‘merit’ and their development of business education as a profession on par with medicine, the clergy, and law, one that intended to bring about a quasi-religious attitude of social stewardship in new managers, give them a “calling” and a clear set of ethical guidelines.

Furthering the drive towards the acquisition of credentials, the logic of scientific objectivity and of objective merit was used to guide policy (Jasanoff, 1987, 2004) and in particular business decisions, driven by new systems of testing and evaluation of individuals on both knowledge and innate biological qualities as a part of the eugenics movement (Carson, 2004, 2007). Despite the stated emphasis on stewardship, the growing enrollment of individuals in systems of testing and evaluation led to an institutional merit (Kett, 2013) based on qualifications, credentials and acquiring exact knowledge become institutionalized.
During the growth of meritocracy, different institutional logics, some conflicting with one another, existed simultaneously due to being held by individuals with differing personalities and desires (ranging from “bequeathing a legacy” to “eugenic development”). Including factors such as individual personal connections, influence and power, determining the logic involved or locating agency become difficult under institutional theory. The growth and development of ideas and their influence can be seen through individuals enrolling other individuals into their networks, but also in the development of the technologies and processes required for things as broad-ranging as course selection and intelligence testing. Power emerges through interpersonal and social connections as a byproduct of which actor has the more connected network and successfully draws others (nonhumans included) into their interests. Although institutional theorists have included a theorization of power (Lawrence, 2008), institutional theory is limited in theorizing or explaining power from a critical perspective (Munir, 2015). The institutionalization of meritocracy is more plausibly explained by the process of enrollment and network formation than through institutional logics or entrepreneurship. This in turn affects explanations of how institutionalization is translated.

**Translating Institutionalization**

The history of Meritocracy in India prior to the 19th century is extensive and is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the colonial education system established in India under the British Empire followed a clearly defined pattern, since Britain had one of the most rigorous and extensive systems of competitive examinations in the world in the 19th century (Kett, 2013) and used the same system in its colonies.
Within the British system, being from a top university (and especially Oxford or Cambridge) guaranteed entry into the elite (Nicholas, 1999). Accordingly, merit – and university entrance opportunity - was judged through scoring in competitive examinations to increasingly exclusive and limited institutions of secondary and then higher education (K. Kumar, 1988; Myrdal, 1970) with the ultimate aim of examinees being one of the few prestigious jobs in private industry or the Indian Civil Service (Dewey, 1973; D. Kumar, 1984). This system remained widely legitimized after Indian independence (Sancheti, 1986). From the ANT and after perspective, these students enrolled into a network of elite-ness through their universities.

Meritocracy therefore existed within the Indian educational system in a different form that did not promote the primacy of business prior to the 1960s and so did not need to be transferred in its entirety. Instead of a total meritocracy meant to judge all aspects of life, as in the American model, the Indian model like the British one before it was meant to determine whether one qualified to become a member of a narrow governing elite or not. The same foundations that developed meritocracy within business education within the United States also extended their influence internationally, becoming a key instrument of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War. The Ford Foundation served as a “mediating institution” that transmitted U.S. business practices and rationales transnationally in part to bolster free markets against communism (Berman, 1983; Khurana et al., 2011) and was involved in the establishment of multiple business schools, including in India.
American aid in Indian development through the Ford Foundation and other organizations sought to reduce the Communist influence in India. The Ford Foundation and the Indian government would discuss the possibility of setting up a National Institute of Management beginning in 1955 (Staples, 1992), followed by the arrival of Prof. George W. Robbins of the University of California at Los Angeles to make recommendations regarding two Indian Institutes of Management (Hill, Haynes, & Baumgartel, 1973; Stifel, Coleman, & Black, 1977), with recommendations implemented in a modified form. IIM Ahmedabad was mentored by the Harvard Business School and supported by the State Government of Gujarat and the Ahmedabad business community, and IIM Calcutta was mentored by the Sloan School of Management at MIT and supported by the State Government of West Bengal but not the Calcutta business community, which limited its growth (Hill et al., 1973; D. Kumar, 1984; Rosen, 1985). Political action drove the creation of networks that determined the future growth and functioning of the IIMs. Theorizing the transfer of American meritocracy becomes incomplete due to the role of international power and political interests in its extension to India. Further, this includes cases of field-level actors (the government, international organizations) being directly involved rather than establishing logics from afar. Such categories as institutional logics become endpoints rather than starting points for analysis.

This, in turn is in line with one of the core elements of Actor-Network Theory, that actors continuously partake in political work by engaging, mobilizing and translating other actors’ interests and then enrolling them in the same cause (Latour, 1983) and an actor may
conceal ("black box") the social complexity that allowed for their emergence (Akrich, 1992). History itself becomes a product of the socially constructed past – a past reconstituted by a historian rather than something that exists a priori (Durepos, Helms Mills, & Mills, 2008).

Assembling archival data can create a history of the past that is radically at odds with a priori notions of an existing history waiting to be uncovered (Durepos & Mills, 2012; Law, 1986), in an approach called ANTi-History (Durepos & Mills, 2011). This follows the traces of actors to show how history is produced to benefit some actors and marginalize others. Since this practice requires unpacking the practices which have led to the creation of accepted and alternate histories of the past unpacking the full history of the transfer of Business Education and the IIMs is still in the future and will require following a wide variety of actors.

From this perspective, studying both the institutionalization of a process and institutional translation become not separate processes involving predetermined institutions, but the consequence of actors enrolling others into their network; and the historical research required to study the past does not yield data about the past but rather a history, constructed by the historian. This is an approach that goes against prior assumptions or categories and challenges the very existence of institutions as a historical reality, which would be required in this case if one were to use institutional theory. A researcher must unpack both the idea of the institution and its constituent actants.

Conclusion

Owing to the number of individuals and organizations who were responsible for the establishment of meritocracy in the United States and then within Indian business education,
and the complex interplay of power and interest responsible for shaping the key questions of “who has merit?” and “how is merit established”, institutional theory appears to fall short when compared to ANT. The large number of ideas, processes and actors reveals the limits of institutional theory, and the use of ANT challenges the basic assumptions of the historical - existence of institutions. Treating meritocracy as a Non-Corporeal Actant (NCA) provides for a clearer understanding of how it came to be established and spread.
References


CHAPTER 3

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL ENTERS THE TWILIGHT STRUGGLE IN INDIA

Introduction

My research examines the role of Harvard Business School in aiding in the development of elite business education in India in the political context of the Cold War. My introduction begins with a brief history of the social and economic role of higher education, in which I identify a gap in existing research that I aim to address, and the organizations that I touch upon. I follow with further brief studies of the background of how business schools sought to make social connections with business elites and sought social legitimacy through a system of meritocracy. Following this short introduction to business schools in general, I introduce the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad and why I consider its origins important to research. I also bring up the historical trajectory of Americanization within business education, which I tie into the activities of both American organizations and business schools. Following this introduction, I set up a detailed outline of my paper, explaining what I set out to do and how I intend to address the gap in research that I have identified.
Elite higher education has long served to legitimize and reproduce existing social and economic arrangements (Subramanian, 2015; Warikoo, 2018; White et al., 2017), and has been instrumental in spreading the meanings and norms surrounding the role of business executives as a socioeconomic elite (Khurana, 2007; Khurana & Penrice, 2011). The development of management education and its legitimation within the United States has long since been traced to the development of networks among powerful individuals, such as Charles William Eliot at Harvard University and Henry Vethake at the MIT who networked with each other and advanced their interests within philanthropic foundations (the Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford Foundations in particular) while maintaining a notable network of socially and politically influential personal connections (Karabel, 2005; Lagemann, 1983, 1989; Sass, 1982). Scholarship has treated the core of this influence within elite higher education as having shifted from these individuals to the foundations that they established in the 20th century.

These foundations which were seen as playing a prominent role in their spread through their influence on government policies regarding education in general and management education in particular, both at the national and international level; they helped advance the development of management education and helped legitimate it, both within the United States and other countries (Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015; Cooke & Kumar, forthcoming; Khurana, Kimura, & Fourcade, 2011; Khurana & Penrice, 2011). Foundations have been responsible for the development of key aspects of American domestic and foreign policy, as well as influencing international relations to favor American interests through ‘soft power’,
spreading pro-capitalist ideology and altering the development of social science theory and research; their influence has been the subject of recent study that examines their political role (Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015; Cooke & Kumar, forthcoming.; Parmar, 2011, 2012, 2015), demonstrating that they have been a key player in the growth of business education as it exists today.

Despite the significant level of research on foundations, the spread of elite business education internationally has otherwise largely been taken-for-granted, alongside the history of the growth and development of neoliberal economics. Even scholars studying the growth and development of business education in the so-called ‘developing world’ assume that dominant ideas about business education and business elites flow, as though naturally, from powerful nations like the U.S. around the world. This worldview is implicit when, for instance, Srinivas (2002) states that “The export of North American management to India, in the 1960s, was a significant process” without going into deep into the details of said process, or in stating that “Indian academics were essential conduits for transferring American pedagogical methods”.

My reading suggests that there has been less work done on the development of interpersonal connections and the legitimacy of individual business schools in the growth of international business education; in the focus on philanthropic foundations as organizations or on the institution of business education, the role of individuals appears to have been given less attention than necessary. Rather than study the foundations again, I study their key allies and collaborators, business schools, which I believe require greater study given the business
school and university positions of key members of the philanthropic foundations. I seek to examine *how* the networks of individuals involved sought to legitimize the spread of business education – not in terms of public claims of professionalism and scientific accuracy (Khurana, 2007; Khurana et al., 2011; Khurana & Penrice, 2011) but rather through networks of connection and influence, and elevating their own status internationally. The question I essentially ask is: How do those involved with top business schools act towards creating a particular sort of business education aimed to create a particular sort of graduate, one that privileges their own status? How was this interpersonal process of creation carried out and was it influenced by the prevailing politics of the mid-20th century?

Cooke and Kumar, in a forthcoming article, examine the influence of philanthropic foundations on the international development of management education over the 20th century, taking on a broader view that accounts for the history and politics of different nations during three different time periods that they identify. The time period I examine is what Cooke and Kumar identify as a second period of management education from post-World War Two to the 1980s, labeled “Management Education and Reconstruction in Europe”, which in my reading of the source material involves more than European management education, but rather management education worldwide during the same time period, that of the Cold War.

**Background**

Historically, business schools have had to project the idea of business as a profession in order to be perceived as legitimate by the public, a state of affairs that existed for business
schools in the United States from their emergence in the late 19th and early 20th century all the way through the 1970s (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Khurana, 2007; Khurana & Spender, 2012b; Zald, 2002). Harvard Business School was not established until the large numbers of Harvard graduates entering business convinced Charles William Eliot, Harvard’s president at the time, that business had risen to sufficient status that it deserved the attention of Harvard graduates (McDonald, 2017), but even so, students and members of the Harvard community continued to see HBS as inferior in status to the rest of Harvard. Within Harvard itself, ideas of individual merit were used to justify the legitimacy and worthiness of individual students, both in terms of admissions to Harvard and their standing on campus during their terms of study.

The genealogy of merit and meritocracy in America is old (Carson, 2007; Kett, 2013), dating back to the founding of the American Republic.Merit provides a “shadow language” of inequality paralleling the much more visible rhetoric of republican equality in America (Carson, 2007, p. xiii), providing a system by which a new elite could be selected and justified within a political ideology that celebrated universal and equal rights, and achievement rather than birth was meant to determine one’s fate in life (Karabel, 2005, pp. 2–3). This was based in turn upon the enlightenment-era belief of natural and artificial differences, and promoting those who were ‘naturally’ superior over those who were ‘artificially’ made superior to others; the ideology of racism and during the late 19th century, the associated “science” of eugenics made group-level differences legitimate (Carson, 2007, p. 4), which was reflected accordingly in attempts by individuals higher in the social class
system to legitimize the superiority of their groups by what they claimed to be an “objective” measure.

In the United States, as in Europe, schooling was used to establish social stratification, providing the possibility of expanding an upper-middle class elite schooled in a socially acceptable manner (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983, p. 293), with the creation of a system of schooling and of traditions that established membership in America’s new ruling class, established new relations of authority and socialized new members, in addition to defining criteria excluding any individuals who were not seen as desirable to be part of this society. Anyone who wished to rise in status was effectively a supplicant to the highly selective admissions systems of top colleges, and the social and economic opportunities these institutions provided. This led to a preoccupation with college admissions in a society where educational credentials lay alongside the inheritance of property as a major vehicle for the transmission of privilege from parent to child (Karabel, 2005, p. 3), creating a gap between “winners” and “losers”. Since socialization, social cohesion and group membership are often brought about by the same actions, processes or rituals as celebrating and/or legitimizing institutions, statuses, or relationships of authority (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983, p. 9), this leads me to look for attempts at such social connection alongside legitimation of Harvard’s goals.

Following from Suddaby et al. (2017) and their identification of the perception view of legitimacy as the most explanatory, I seek to examine perceived legitimacy through unearthing the patterns of connections among actors and the political interest work that they
engage in. The general richness of the data available at HBS and my knowledge of Harvard’s long history and influence on other schools and universities made me choose it as the site of my study as opposed to the much later MIT Sloan School of Management. Using historical data from other texts and data from my own visit to the Special Collections at the Baker Library at Harvard Business School, I examine how Harvard faculty and administrators’ interests were projected, translated and enrolled into other networks.

An additional element to account for is Harvard’s own perception of itself, and its actions as well as interests(I refer to Harvard as a single punctuated actor here). Other authors speaking of Harvard Business School believe that HBS positions itself as a worldwide fount of management knowledge, one that always seeks to remain “relevant” to business but without specifying what that term means, in a way that enforces moral control over faculty members(Anteby, 2013). Others note a tendency for Harvard members in general to believe that a “a thing isn’t a thing until Harvard says so”(McDonald, 2017, p. 18), the inherent superiority of Harvard students, like when Charles William Eliot decided to establish Harvard Business School on the grounds that business had risen to the level of Harvard because Harvard students were entering business careers(McDonald, 2017), or “insisting that it is doing one thing when it is quite clear to all involved that it is doing something else”(McDonald, 2017, p. 17), for example, Karabel’s study of admissions policies at Harvard, Yale and Princeton revealed that the admissions were based on institutional interests and in assuring the continued entry of a particular social class of individual, while being legitimized as being based on “merit”(Karabel, 2005). Karabel, in particular,
assembled significant amounts of archival information to create a history of admissions that was different from prior official histories or statements of practice. A recurrent theme in these accounts is a seemingly implicit understanding that Harvard is superior to all else, and must continue to seem that way to Harvard faculty, administrators and students.

Meritocracy as a system grew within business education as a means of connecting the interests of several powerful individual actors (Krishnamurty, 2019). My focus was the study of the founding of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), which were deliberately created in the early 1960s to import American management practices to India. They are now ostensibly some of the most meritocratic business schools in the world, selecting only one out of fifty applicants. Some measure of their importance can be gauged by the fact that they are the premier business schools in a country that had 3902 business schools in 2014, representing over a quarter of the business degree granting institutions in the world at the time (McDonald, 2017, p. 233). An IIM degree opens opportunities for students from a range of backgrounds (Gupta et al., 2003), propagates the idea of meritocracy within business education, and trains future managers of Indian corporations as a social elite that identifies itself as such.

The Ford Foundation, Harvard Business School and the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology were involved in the founding of the IIMs in their early 1960s, with the former having been acknowledged in its role in development within India and being accepted by no less than Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (Hill et al., 1973). The Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad, founded in 1961, was mentored
by the Harvard Business School and The Indian Institute of Management at Calcutta, founded in the same year, was assisted by the MIT Sloan School of Management, and both IIMs received financial support from the Ford Foundation (Hill et al., 1973; Rosen, 1985).

**Indian Institutes of Management**

The business schools that I choose to study are the Indian Institutes of Management, which represent India’s top business schools. At present, they send their highest-ranking graduates to compete with the supposed best from Harvard Business School and other global schools of business. According to previously existing histories, these institutes were established in the early 1960s by the Government of India and the Ford Foundation, with the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad being mentored by the Harvard Business School (HBS) and the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta being mentored by the MIT Sloan School of Management (MIT Sloan) (Hill et al., 1973). Indian Institutes of Management select only one out of fifty students in an entrance exam, followed by interviews. An IIM degree opens opportunities for students from a range of backgrounds (Gupta et al., 2003) and trains future managers of Indian corporations.

Managers who graduate from IIMs present themselves as having earned their elite status and its associated rewards rightfully, as a result of their qualities and their efforts, and in terms of their qualifications and ideology may be seen by their peers as belonging to the broader global corporate elite. From my understanding, the socioeconomic status of this elite may be considered contingent on them having graduated from the IIMs or similar elite institutions of business education.
Older institutes of business management or commerce education have existed in India but their records are scarce and level of public recognition is low, while IIM Ahmedabad, mentored by HBS, has been consistently evaluated by Indian ranking agencies as the highest-rated Indian business school both within India and among Indian business schools globally, with IIM Calcutta, mentored by MIT Sloan, consistently within the top five if not the top three. The two mentoring institutions are widely known within the field of business education; the MIT Sloan School of Business is highly ranked among American business schools in surveys. Harvard Business School, in addition to being one of the top business schools both within the United States and globally according to surveys, has had long and extensive influence over the field of business education (Khurana, 2007; McDonald, 2017). In addition to its extensive connections with the field of business consulting through its connection with McKinsey, MBAs from HBS “dominated” in the field of business leadership among business leaders with MBAs during the period of 1930-1969 before ceding some influence to Stanford and other MBA granting institutions over the next three decades (A detailed account is contained in Mayo, Nohria and Singleton (2006, pp. 136–138))

Having been in an IIM myself and perceiving the supposed intelligence and superiority of “elite” business students very differently from within made me wonder how this system of elite business schools was created in the first place, or why an Indian business school should depend on Harvard Business School cases and textbooks. From my later reading of research suggesting that most organizations were influenced by factors present at the time of their creation, this led to me choosing the archives of the Harvard Business
School, which was involved in the creation of the IIM at Ahmedabad during the 1960s, as a site of my study.

I also investigated the archives at MIT. Although the MIT archives contained many documents pertaining to IIM Calcutta, I did not find any documents pertaining to the decision-making process involving MIT Sloan’s involvement with IIM Calcutta, including a surprising paucity of letters or other documents belonging to Prof. Thomas Hill, who had been MIT Sloan’s main representative in Calcutta, which prompted me to drop MIT Sloan as a site of study and focus on HBS. Neither could I gain access to archival material from either of the IIMs, which prompted me to exclude them as research sites. Excluding the IIMs also had the benefit of keeping my research more focused given the volume of material I anticipated working with. Even so, the data I collected pertaining to the interests and social connections of HBS faculty was adequate to answer my research question about how HBS was involved in the development of elite business education during the Cold War period.

**Foundations and Americanization**

American business practices diffused through the work of the Foundations as well as due to the increasing hegemony of American business practices through globalization (Boxenbaum, 2006; Engwall, 2007) beginning in the mid-20th century and growing exponentially in recent decades. So has the growing Americanization of business schools worldwide, which have increasingly started to adopt American methods and practices even in countries that had their own established format of business education (Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Engwall, 2004; Kieser, 2004; Tiratsoo, 2004). My
research on the IIMs is meant to add a historic dimension to a growing interest in global management education (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2004; Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015; Hedmo, Sahlin-Andersson, & Wedlin, 2007; Khurana, 2007; Khurana & Spender, 2012b; Vaara & Faï, 2012) and add to the aforementioned research on the Cold War influence on American management education. Further, it adds a different dimension to existing research on legitimacy in management education. Previous studies have focused on the development of legitimacy by management education in the past, a loss of legitimacy in the present, and explicit or implicit suggestions in order to legitimize management education (Alajoutsijarvi et al., 2015; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Khurana, 2007; Khurana & Penrice, 2011; Khurana & Spender, 2012b, 2012a; McKee, Mills, & Weatherbee, 2005; Vaara & Faï, 2012). I add to this work by tracing the actors who brought about the legitimation of business schools through the archive at HBS, in order to better understand the business school environment in which global elites are socialized and positioned to steward and legitimate neoliberal institutions.

It is possible that the early influence of HBS on IIM Ahmedabad in the 1960s allowed the IIMs to derive their methods of socializing and creating elites directly from these two business schools during an era in which business education was expanding in the United States, limited outside North America and Europe but with new schools being established further afield due to the influence of HBS and the Ford Foundation (Cooke & Kumar, forthcoming.).
Scholarship suggests that exclusive, elite educational institutes have long been used as gatekeepers to the socioeconomic elite with a variety of factors playing roles in the decision-making process for admissions to elite colleges (Deresiewicz, 2014; Karabel, 2005; Karen, 2017; Warikoo, 2018). Gatekeeping is the process of developing and implementing criteria that yields access to scarce resources (Karen, 1990; Rivera, 2016) and it is also used to define social reality, the way in which individuals perceive their world and act upon it (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The business school has been crucial in establishing beliefs about business (Huczynski, 1994), as well as acting as an establisher of identity (Khurana & Snook, 2011), because they are accepted as legitimate in these roles. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, each nation had its own elite institutions of higher education (Karabel & Halsey, 1977; Wren, 1983) and its own norms of how a business elite was trained and composed (Goldthorpe, Payne, & Llewellyn, 1978; Khurana, 2007; Sass, 1982). Political elites often governed the extension of commerce across borders. Increasingly, from our current perspective, business higher education is globally produced and governed by bodies such as the AACSB and its graduates, top managers of multinational corporations, govern global commerce and economic distribution.

Given the current prevalence of business schools and the debate over their legitimacy, how were the interests of previously identified elite individuals and groups connected to their formation? And how may we see the manner in which their legitimacy and status were enacted during a given period of time or given event using materials from an archive? This paper ties in to the growing research related to the “historical turn” in Business and
Organizational Studies, particularly in the growth of archival research and the increasing use of reflexivity in the use of historical sources. It also connects to the growing research on the material and visual aspects of legitimacy in organization studies (Boxenbaum, Jones, Meyer, & Svejnová, 2018; Puyou & Quattrone, 2018). I attempt to address some of the “historical amnesia” about the origins and spread of business education that Zald (2002) identified, by assembling a narrative that connects the growth of business education to broader social and political events and interests during the Cold War era, while noting the role of individual business schools in the process.

Research Design

This study on the legitimacy of business education requires the use of archival material as it involves the study of a past time period rather than an ongoing event. The archive is a growing object of study within Organizational Studies and Business History, with archival research in this field borrowing from a previously existing corpus of archival research while interrogating the concept of the archive both as a philosophical concept and in its active function in creating memory (Barros, 2016). This work adds to the growing interest in archival research and interest in organizational memory in the field of Management and Organizational Studies (Barros, Carneiro, & Wanderley, 2018; Boxenbaum et al., 2018; Decker, 2013, 2014) in this case, the organizations in question being business schools perceived by the public as being as the forefront of management knowledge. Archives are a source of historical data, but they are not a neutral actor, rather privileging those who create and curate them, and whose interests they represent. Neither are they
complete, for there is always data that can’t or isn’t included in an archive (Farge, 2013). Therefore, I need to explicitly acknowledge that I am studying only a part of the greater narrative, and from the particular point of view expressed in the archives.

I begin with the definitions of the archive contained in (Mills & Helms Mills, 2011) and (Barros, 2016) regarding the difference between the archives as a physical repository and the archives in their Foucauldian sense as a set of social practices governing what can be said. Both Barros (2016) and Mills and Helms Mills (2011) distinguish between the archive in its physical sense as a place with a collection of documents, and its Foucauldian sense as a system of rules by which structure how knowledge is produced – in other words, how it is possible to “know” something at a particular historical point and how this knowledge is changed. Since this work deals so heavily with the archives in their material form, and the way knowledge is manifested in its material sense – inscribed in documents and stored away for posterity – I choose the material definition over the Foucauldian one, which I shall detail in the next section. Although I include an acknowledgement of how I am limited by the material form, I also address why choosing the more detailed Foucauldian definition is unnecessary for my research.

My understanding of legitimacy was informed by a recent comprehensive recent literature review on legitimacy by Suddaby, Bitektine and Haack (2017), in which I follow from the authors in considering legitimacy to be a perception, rather than a property or process. The perception form of legitimacy tends to emphasize the role of the (individual) evaluators of legitimacy, since it is individuals who perceive organizations or other social
entities, render judgments about their legitimacy and act upon their judgments, with the perception of legitimacy emerging on the macro level as the combined effect of all their evaluations (Bitektine, 2011). As noted in the review, scholars studying perception try to shed light on the intra-individual perceptions, attitudes and judgments that serve as ‘microfoundations’ of legitimacy and at the same time study the social interactions among actors that create legitimacy as a collective phenomenon (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Suddaby et al., 2017). One idea that appeared to be implicit in the reviewed studies was that the “actor” identified as “owning” or “possessing” legitimacy was different from the one evaluating legitimacy judgments – in the process neglecting self-legitimation or self-perception. My intertextual readings with material that covered the history of Harvard and its admissions suggested that everyone who identified, wanted to identify, or came to identify with Harvard as a social identity judged their own actions or interests within the broader umbrella of ‘Harvard’ actions or interests as being legitimate; they seemed to want to continuously and repeatedly prove to themselves that they, as a part of Harvard, were in some sense superior to whatever other social entities or organizations may have existed. Therefore, I look at Harvard actors self-legitimizing actions taken by Harvard as a social entity, and how they intertwine notions of Harvard’s legitimacy with its own interests, whatever those interests may be.

Since the data involved individual letters and documents rather than numerical data, I chose to survey the archives exhaustively for documents from the early years of the Indian Institutes of Management (primarily before 1965) for any documents discussing personal
relationships, teaching methodologies, or character judgments; essentially any document that expressed how the visiting American professors from HBS and MIT Sloan felt about the worldview and purpose of both their Indian counterparts and more broadly regarding the IIMs and Indian business education. I show the documents that I have obtained (with permission from HBS) in the appendix and make use of them to demonstrate the enactments of status and legitimacy within.

**Method**

In this section, I describe the manner in which I sought to conduct an exhaustive study of the qualitative data available in the archives, with a brief section on how I theorize the archive and its role in maintaining legitimacy. I include this section because I have reviewed the literature on archival research and am aware of the recent developments in archival research that study the nature and role of the archive in detail, particularly in the field of postcolonial studies. Therefore, I need to explain how I define the archive and in what manner I choose to approach it.

Throughout this paper, I tend to use the term ‘archive’ in its physical sense because this is the definition favored most often by scholars unless explicitly mentioned to be otherwise, and because this is also the predominant sense in which I will be studying the HBS archive. Puyou & Quattrone(2018) demonstrated that legitimacy could be enacted materially and visually, using archival accounts to study how accounting practices in three different places in three different time periods(Ancient Rome, Renaissance Florence, Victorian Britain) was used to legitimize the standing of individuals with respect to their
social peers. Although Puyou and Quattrone focused on the role of accounts rather than archives in general, their work was enabled by archival material from the three different locations and time periods in understanding how social relations and statuses were recorded and enacted on the basis of what was inscribed in said records. My study of legitimacy is more focused.

My work at Harvard took place over the equivalent of 25 days over a three year period, examining 500 documents of different sizes pertaining to the establishment of IIM Ahmedabad. The Special Collections at the de Gaspé Beaubien Reading Room at the Baker Library of the Harvard Business School have a set of records pertaining to this relationship onsite, called the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, Records, which completed processing in January, 2016. The records are stored in 18 boxes (of which I was denied access to one box containing personnel records for legal reasons governing their access) amounting to 9 linear feet of varied materials on Harvard Business School’s association with the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, which I will detail later in this paper.

During the process of my visits, I realized that I was relying heavily on HBS’s archives as a legitimate source of information on IIM Ahmedabad, and that this feeling permeated my work on different levels. As a result of my reliance on HBS data, I became aware of how deeply and sincerely the Harvard Business School members involved in bringing American business education to India treated Harvard Business School as a source of legitimate knowledge and as a legitimate mentor for IIM Ahmedabad, as well as business education in general.
Harvard Business School’s mission statement is “We educate leaders who make a difference in the world.” HBS’s voice on matters of business administration or business management is regarded as legitimate and authoritative, both within and outside the United States. Harvard’s authoritative status did not emerge “from the ether” but because Harvard, like a number of other colleges in the United States in the 19th century, was guided by its leading administrators and faculty members towards seeking funding from socially and economically successful individuals as well as due to decisions regarding curriculum and enrollment by the then-president of the university, Charles William Eliot (Karabel, 2005). Harvard’s subsequent influence on early philanthropic foundations was similarly due to deliberate acts of interpersonal connection and influence (Lagemann, 1999). Based on existing historical work, Harvard’s own legitimacy was therefore a consequence of deliberate action and partially based upon the pre-eminent position of the United States during the 20th century.

Since Harvard’s own influence during its early years spread by appealing to the interests of socially and economically powerful individuals, I argue that Harvard must appeal to the interests of highly placed individuals in the field of business education internationally and seek to enroll their interests into its own; both the archives and existing secondary sources detail Harvard’s broad network of academic connections following the Second World War.

Analogous to how they had supported Ford Foundation activities and business schools in other countries in Europe and Asia (Parmar, 2015), Harvard Business School and
the MIT Sloan School of Management helped mentor the newly founded Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad and Calcutta respectively in the early 1960s, under the auspices of the Ford Foundation. It was during this period that the Ford Foundation was highly active in India and established links with political leaders and officials throughout the Indian subcontinent, the most important of whom was Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru himself (Hill et al., 1973; Rosen, 1985; Staples, 1992). Indian foreign relations with the United States had been relatively distant in the early 1950s due to Cold War tensions and dissatisfaction within the United States regarding India’s non-aligned status, but the Ford Foundation and other philanthropic foundations were active in seeking to influence both industrial development and management education during this period (Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015; Cooke & Kumar, forthcoming), and then-senator John F. Kennedy argued for greater U.S. assistance to India during the same period as a counter to communist influence in Asia, a policy that he further advanced upon becoming President of the United States in 1960 (Sackley, 2004). The IIMs were a part, therefore, of broader American involvement in India.

Although the IIMs were little known and generally neglected during their early years - as evidenced by their need to advertise actively in newspapers to explain their position and recruit students, as well as attempts to find students of adequately high standards during the 1960s – their position has gained increasing significance as the result of the growth of business education in India, with India hosting the most business schools of any country in the world by 2014 (McDonald, 2017). All the Indian Institutes of Management founded since have been perceived by the general public as educational institutes of high quality, and entry
into one of these institutions has since been seen as a gateway into joining India’s social and managerial elite (Gupta et al., 2003; Srinivas, 2008). The IIMs were set up to reach their present prominence as the result of a deliberate and concerted effort to do so, as noted in Krishnamurty (2019), and their present status as India’s premier business schools allows them to groom a new leading class of managers indoctrinated in prevailing neoliberal ideology at present, but anything to do with having a direct role in the international politics between India and the United States during the 1960s remains uncharted.

I visited the Special Collections at the Baker Library of the Harvard Business School during repeated short sessions throughout the years 2014, 2015 and 2016, with the bulk of data collection happening in the period between May and August 2017, in the de Gaspé Beaubien Reading Room. During the 20-25 day period of my visit I made use of the pencils and paper offered by the archive to write down observations, and brought my computer (and keyboard) along so that I could write down relevant passages in their entirety.

While examining documents in the archive, I was focused on social relations amongst actors. As such, I generally excluded documents related to financial matters, which I excluded from this study because I perceived them to be relatively routine and lacking the information that I sought; I was unable to find a meaningful connection between them and the object of my research. However, I was careful to note observations about students, faculty and education, which I considered of prime importance. I also considered anything dealing with broader political motivations or individual interests to be highly important. The Archives hold and retain a partially chance and partially curated, organized, structured
collection of memories of Harvard’s past connections and associations in the form of original documents, carbon copies and photocopies that were generated by Harvard faculty and their associates, and organized and filed away by secretaries and other administrators. The history of IIM Ahmedabad that this archive allows me to construct is also a history of Harvard’s involvement with the “right” people and having the “right” interests, based on the particular set of memories stored at Harvard. I keep in mind constructivism’s limitation of not being able to give the full account of the production of any given narrative even if it can show that narratives are produced (Trouillot, 1995, p. 13). Even if the conversations are relatively low-key and do not deal with grand pronouncements or grand events in and of themselves, these are – as Stoler notes – the most useful for determining social context (Stoler, 2009, p. 7) and revealing the relations between the individuals whose conversations are kept in the archive.

Findings

List of Key Players

I include a list of key actors from the documents below in tabular form, with a brief description of their position and role in the creation of the Indian Institutes of Management.

Rather than try to graphically depict an unaesthetic and confusing “tangled web” of roles and influence, I chose to include this table for the sake of providing readers a concise and clear summary of roles played before moving on to the data section. I exclude some actors referenced in the data, like Maurice Zinkins, Rolf and “Ronnie” Lyton, and Miss
Barbara M. Sims (secretary to Harry L. Hansen) due to having little or no direct role in decision-making in the creation of IIM Ahmedabad. Additionally, I do not explicitly code actors according to their roles due to the fact that individual actors took on multiple different roles at once, and I judged that no greater insight could be made from assigning them coding categories at this particular stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role and Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vikram Sarabhai</td>
<td>Honorary Director of Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, initiated talks with HBS to take part in its creation. Part of Sarabhai business family of Ahmedabad and also a highly prominent physicist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. S. Thacker</td>
<td>Director General, Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India, and also Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research &amp; Cultural Affairs. Associate of Sarabhai, connected to Ahmedabad business community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamla Chowdhry</td>
<td>Director of Operations at IIM Ahmedabad. Close associate of Vikram Sarabhai, took care of most operations in his absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Teele</td>
<td>Dean of Harvard Business School 1955-1962, involved in its growing international activities. Key decision-maker at HBS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John B. Fox</td>
<td>Professor of Industrial Relations and Associate Dean. Head of Office of Overseas Relations beginning 1955. Met Sarabhai at MIT during unspecified event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role and Additional Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fritz Roethlisberger</td>
<td>Senior professor, close associate of Elton Mayo and co-founder of the Human Relations Theory. Met Sarabhai in India at unspecified date and place. Associated with Sarabhai closely enough to strongly vouch for his credibility and reliability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Hansen</td>
<td>Chairman of HBS International Division. Key figure in early correspondence and key contact of Warren Haynes and other HBS faculty visiting IIM Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.H.(Russ) Hassler</td>
<td>Associate Dean at Harvard Business School, correspondent of George Robbins at UCLA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Robbins</td>
<td>Associate Dean at the University of California Los Angeles. Author of 1959 report recommending two institutes of management education in India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Warren Haynes</td>
<td>Ahmedabad Project Director for HBS, specializing in Managerial Economics. Key contact of Hansen in IIM Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melvin R. (Mel) Copen</td>
<td>Junior Harvard professor at IIM Ahmedabad, with a PhD thesis based on Indian industry. Frequent correspondent to Harry Hansen, sent numerous comments and observations about stay at Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Douglas Ensminger</td>
<td>Head of the Ford Foundation in India and influential both within the Foundation and the Indian government, Harvard contacted him in order to secure funding for its activities IIM Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collections containing IIM Materials

I turned towards the data present in the archives regarding the Indian Institute of Management, which I have curated in order to present my findings.

The relevant material had been sourced from the personal effects of the deceased faculty members, which had been donated to the Baker Library after their death. The collections pertinent to my study, called the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Records, 1958-1971, were largely collected from the office documents of Professor Harry L. Hansen after his retirement, when he donated them to the Baker Library. In addition, I have found office papers pertinent to the Indian Institute of Management, in the papers of other former faculty members who were involved in the project, albeit indirectly – Kenneth Andrews, Paul Lawrence and Archibald “Arch” Dooley. Documents pertinent to this subject from within the Harvard archive, therefore span a time period from the late 1950s through the 1960s and 1970s.

Although I am informed that Harvard professors, benefactors/donors and other Harvard associates donated material to Harvard after their death or retirement, I do not have access to the full, detailed statistics of how material is donated to the Special Collections and neither is it directly relevant to this particular study, since I am not conducting a Foucauldian reading of the archives or a full archival ethnography. However, I do know that all of the documents in this collection have been processed to remove personnel evaluations and other legally restricted materials (such as grade sheets) – these are restricted by Massachusetts law for a period of 75 years and by Harvard policy for 80 years, so any restricted folders from the
period 1961-1966 will remain unavailable until 2041-2046. All restricted documents/folders were left in a box, Box 18, that I did not have the permission to access.

These documents have been filed in a new set of folders corresponding exactly to the original folders. The labeling of the folders and the arrangement of the boxes is based on the labeling and filing system originally created by their filers - Prof. Harry L. Hansen and his secretaries, most prominently Miss Barbara M. Sims, who served as his regular secretary throughout the period covered. Miss Sims was responsible for handling all of his correspondence, and her role was denoted by the subscript HLH:bms – standing for “Harry L. Hansen – Barbara M. Sims” – marking her role in drafting, typing and organizing correspondence on his behalf. (Other secretaries would use the same subscript format in their letters) As such, the choices of the inclusion, removal and arrangement of what material went into the archive were dictated by the originators of this information even before they handed their materials to the archivists.

I choose to include this material because the comprehensiveness, the ordering, and the curating of these materials were important – these were not considered worth being available for research until they had been carefully ordered and placed in their folders, a process that was complete in January 2016, at which point I received an email from Harvard Business School stating that the IIM Ahmedabad collections were open and available for research.

Legal matters also controlled archival access and contents. I spent approximately 25 working days of 3-5 hours each examining the records. Of the eighteen boxes (nine linear feet of material) in the collection, only box 18, containing personnel records, was not made
accessible to me due to the aforementioned Harvard policy as well as Federal and State Law regarding such records being classified for a minimum of 75 years (80 under Harvard). I was allowed access to all the others, which were stored onsite in the Baker Library building.

Documents from the Baker Library Collections spanned a broad selection of relevant materials, giving the impression of being a comprehensive collection of all formal and informal communication between Harvard and India. These included the following.

1. Personal correspondence.

2. Minor financial items – (Travel receipts, itineraries, smaller budgeting and financial details pertinent to individual travel and smaller funded items.)

3. Major financial items – (Budgeting and financial documents pertinent to the institute itself, campus operations, student scholarships, professor pay, and other major financial and budgeting requirements or commitments.)


5. Meeting minutes.

6. Hiring and personnel material (minus embargoed Harvard-based Personnel Records)


8. Syllabi, pedagogical materials, discussion of both.

9. Sample case material, actual cases, case requests+financing
10. Advertising material, discussions thereof.

1. Personal correspondence. Many of these letters involve day-to-day administrative trivia, such as requests for cases, itineraries, receipts, or discussion of personal and family matters.

Material that I judged as irrelevant, such as correspondence only tangentially relevant to the IIM, - conversations about personal topics like family, children, the weather, alcohol licenses or games of bridge, conversations with India-based correspondents with no direct IIM involvement, minor administrative trivia and material outside the scope of my research - is often mixed with highly relevant material, such as discussions of conditions on the ground, expectations of Indian faculty, observations about the political and social scenarios at hand, and the difficulties encountered in trying to establish Harvard’s method of teaching business administration in an otherwise unfamiliar environment. One particular personal letter by Prof. Melvyn Copen contains pertinent observations regarding Indian students and their status with regards to Harvard students.

Most personal correspondence is clearly labeled by folder with the name of the correspondent (e.g. Vikram Sarabhai) or the topic (e.g: Educational Testing Services, Princeton; Advanced Management Program 1965-66 ) but the large volume of personal correspondence, often copied onto very thin, translucent sheets of yellow, white or light pink “onion paper”, makes the search through the correspondence time-consuming and sometimes unsystematic. As a researcher, I have had to revisit personal correspondence more than once to ensure that I did not overlook information of potential significance.
The Harvard archives contained highly detailed personal correspondence including records of several key decisions and meetings that led to Harvard’s acceptance of mentoring the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad.

2. Memoranda. These were the most significant documents in the archives for the purposes of my research. Some of these memoranda were circulated among the institute faculty and administrators, while others were long, confidential memoranda on the state of affairs at the institute and the troubles encountered. The latter were especially informative, going into details about the differences in thinking and expectations amongst the professors sent to Ahmedabad and the realities they had met.

Several confidential memoranda were sent to Harry L. Hansen from professors Warren Haynes, Melvyn Copen and Al Cohen, all of whom had been stationed at Ahmedabad and who sent reports detailing the conditions prevalent and the issues involved, along with the individuals taking part in these issues. These memoranda gave a clear image of the difficulties faced on the ground and were useful in understanding the functioning of the institute and matters that Harvard deemed necessary to resolve. They also showed the mindset of the Harvard professors sent there and their expectations – as well as their views about their own involvement.

More explicit questions regarding the merit of students were raised in faculty memoranda regarding the level of preparation of students, the orientation procedures required, the syllabi that needed to be designed, and the testing. Some of this material explicitly highlighted the differences in conditions that existed between Harvard and the new
IIM such as the differences in student quality and ability, and thus the need for measures such as extra mathematics classes and associated testing that would be meaningless at Harvard.

3. Meeting minutes. These included long and detailed lists of events covered at the meetings held by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad Committee, headed by the Chairman of the Committee, the then-Chief Minister of the State of Gujarat and dealing primarily with administrative matters and funding, including discussions with Dr. Douglas Ensminger and other Ford Foundation officials.

There were also minutes from faculty meetings discussing syllabi and curricula, scheduling, and matters pertaining to students, many of which were directly related to the question of student behavior, qualifications, abilities and grading, and which were helpful in informing my research. Some of the grade sheets for IIM students were in fact available attached to the meeting materials, since unlike the Harvard material, IIM Ahmedabad grading material did not fall under the same legal restrictions.

4. Miscellaneous material. This included hiring forms, budgetary material, receipts, travel documents, and other similar material. Although I transcribed some of this material during the earlier stages of my research, I tended to disregard these as my research went on due to them not reflecting any details on the legitimation of the project as individual documents, but I include them nevertheless as a part of the archive and the general organization that leads to the visitor perceiving it as legitimate. I made an exception for those materials that discussed the rationale behind funding specific pedagogical requirements or
scholarship needs, because those explicitly or implicitly discussed what, specifically, merited funding.

5. Brochures or advertisements. Brochures and other materials were used to describe and advertise the IIM, its courses, and its purpose and function. There were draft advertisement materials for the IIM, as well as discussions about how to publicize the IIM within national newspapers, design a logo for it, and other materials related to advertisement and publicity.

The wholesale collection of these materials came via Harry L. Hansen through his secretary, Barbara M. Sims, and a large number of these were correspondence from individuals affiliated with Harvard present at IIM Ahmedabad, such as William Warren Haynes and Melvyn R. Copen, as well as Indians like Vikram Sarabhai and Kamla Chowdhury. The prominence of the individuals is itself important. Like Trouillot notes, some of the silences introduced in archives are a result of retrospective significance (Trouillot, 1995, p. 26) but this also applies to that which is more prominent. The fact that Harvard had chosen to preserve correspondence belonging to Harry Hansen and Warren Haynes while using the same file folder layout as Barbara M. Sims meant that I was searching a rich set of documents belonging primarily to one individual, with all the personal associations and understandings that it brought along.
Material within the Archives and the People to whom they pertain

Through visiting the archives, I assembled a history of Harvard’s involvement in Ahmedabad through the chronologically ordered material present in the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad Records, which were assembled from materials donated by Prof. Harry L. Hansen upon his retirement. Other Harvard professors – Kenneth R. Andrews, Archibald Richard Dooley (Arch Dooley) and Paul Lawrence – had folders containing materials pertinent to the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, but relating more generally to teaching and course materials. There was an additional “Archives Vertical file” containing a photograph and some other correspondence. Although I went through these additional folders, I did not examine or include their material in greater detail because I judged the information in them to be unnecessary for my research. The documents contained in this archive keep a record of communication between Harvard’s faculty and administrators and the faculty and administrators of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. The correspondence also includes a record of the founding of IIM Ahmedabad, which I unravel.

Although the Ford Foundation had been involved in India through its community development programs, Harvard Business School’s involvement with the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (Hill et al., 1973), was not forced or imposed on India by the Ford Foundation. The Foundation had contracts with the MIT and the UCLA. Harvard was invited to mentor the to-be created Ahmedabad institute by the man who would become its honorary director, Vikram Sarabhai.
Dr. Vikram Sarabhai was the Honorary Director of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad upon its founding, and the man who had visited Harvard in order to seek its involvement. Sarabhai was a physicist by training and an expert in cosmic rays who was involved with developing India’s then-nascent space program. He was also an industrialist belonging to the Sarabhai business family of Ahmedabad, and headed the Ahmedabad Textile Industry’s Research Association (ATIRA). His interest in the Human Relations School of Management had brought him in contact with Fritz Roethlisberger at the Harvard Business School (who, as I later indicate, he had met during an unspecified visit to India) and both of them had formed enough of a connection that Roethlisberger was able to vouch for him during an incident when Sarabhai’s trustworthiness was called into question. Roethlisberger had been the assistant to Elton Mayo and had been involved with the Hawthorne experiments, making him a key member of the Human Relations School of business management ever since its inception.

The oldest letter in the correspondence folder of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad Records is from Sarabhai, and it is from this point that I start tracing the history of Harvard Business School’s involvement with the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

Based on the correspondence and other documents, I developed a basic scheme of emphasis on two major sets of themes that I noticed were present. The nature of the data present in the correspondence precludes me from developing a full inductive coding scheme (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) but I take note of major emergent themes from the data in
the findings section. When referring to individual documents, I use a scheme of underlining for emphasis.

When emphasizing statements or discussions pertinent to HBS interests and actions, the “where, what and how to do things”. I use a single underline for emphasis on anything related to these within the documents.

When emphasizing statements or discussions of people, judgments/assessments of their status, character and importance, or personal connections, I use a double underline instead.

Wherever necessary to emphasize a point or segment that I consider having special importance within a given context, I may use a third style of underlining, such as bold, dotted or wave underline, which I accordingly refer to in the text.

**First Letter: Sarabhai approaches HBS**

In a letter dated April 1, 1961 that indicated both familiarity and prior correspondence, Vikram Sarabhai let Dean John Fox of the School of Business Administration know that it had been decided by the Government of India to set up two All-India Institutes of Management, one in Calcutta and the other at Ahmedabad, and that the Ford Foundation had decided that the M.I.T. School of Industrial Management[sic] should assist Calcutta. He mentioned that Prof. M. S. Thacker, the Director General, Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India, and also Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research & Cultural Affairs, was coming to Cambridge and that he was personally
concerned about the development of the Institute at Ahmedabad. Sarabhai asked that Thacker be invited over to the Business School and mentioned his own interest in the Ahmedabad institute, and a wish to come up with a “satisfactory arrangement” with Harvard during his own planned visit to Cambridge (Sarabhai, 1961). Although this letter did not elaborate upon the reasons behind the choice of Harvard Business School, it establishes Sarabhai’s personal involvement and political connections in this project. In ANT terms, Sarabhai enrolled Harvard into his network to further his own interests.

On April 1, 1961, Vikram Sarabhai mailed Harvard faculty member John Bayley Fox from the Physical Research Laboratory in Ahmedabad, which Sarabhai himself had established in 1947 to conduct research into physics and astronomy. Sarabhai’s letter, dated in the American rather than Commonwealth format followed in India (month first) alluded to a previous conversation with Fritz Roethlisberger about India’s plans to establish all-India Institutes of Management.

Sarabhai’s own salutation is familiar, referring to Fox as “Dear John”. Another memorandum indicates that Sarabhai had met Fox at an unspecified event at MIT where he had shown interest in HBS. Although it is unclear when this first meeting happened and how often the two subsequently corresponded, but Fox was well placed for regular contact with an international correspondent. Fox had been a consultant with the Ford Foundation in 1953. He also taught industrial relations and had been the head of the Department of Overseas Relations since its founding in 1955, which brought him in contact with visitors from 85

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countries and allowed him a position to oversee the distribution of funds to any new business schools that Harvard was mentoring during this time period.

Even had the two not previously met or corresponded with each other, Fox would have been a very reasonable point of contact for Sarabhai or anyone else seeking to contact the Harvard Business School when seeking its assistance on an international project.

I reproduce Sarabhai’s April 1, 1961 letter below, underlining items of importance – the connections between Sarabhai, John Fox and Fritz Roethlisberger, the role of the Ford Foundation, and the position of M.S. Thacker in India, all of which Sarabhai presented as a reason for Fox and Roethlisberger to get aboard with Sarabhai’s interests in setting up the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

Take notice of the double underline referring to Prof. Thacker’s status and position as a representative of the Government of India. His position and importance will be given clear emphasis in every letter in which he is mentioned, to the point that textual mentions of each instance of Thacker’s importance become superfluous.

My dear John,

As Fritz may have told you, it has now been decided by the Government of India that the two all India Institutes of Management would be set up shortly – one at Calcutta and the other at Ahmedabad. The Ford Foundation is taking interest in both these
institutes and have decided that the M.I.T. School of Industrial Management should assist the Calcutta Institute.

Prof. M. S. Thacker, the Director General, Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India, and also Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research & Cultural Affairs, will be visiting Cambridge during the first week of April to attend the Centenary Celebrations of M.I.T. Prof. Thacker is personally concerned on the behalf of the Government of India for the development of the institute at Ahmedabad, and I would very much appreciate if you could invite him over to the Business School, so that he may visit your institution. I am interested that in the development of the Ahmedabad Institute, we should have assistance from the Business School if it is possible for you to work out a satisfactory arrangement. I am therefore writing this letter and am sending a copy of it to Prof. Thacker as well as to Fritz.

I am leaving for the United States today and will reach Cambridge on the 27th of April after visiting several universities in the north and the west on behalf of the National Science Foundation. I hope to spend two months at Cambridge, and I greatly look forward to the pleasure of meeting you and your colleagues.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Vikram A. Sarabhai
Sarabhai was by 1961 highly influential within both the Indian government and the business community in Gujarat and both Dean Stanley Teele and Harry Hansen were aware of his position (Fox, 1961e). A physicist who had received his doctorate in the subject from Cambridge in England, Sarabhai had broad business connections and had also founded the Advanced Textile Industry Research Association (ATIRA) in Ahmedabad in December 1947, to conduct scientific research into textile development and into new management techniques. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, known for his emphasis on industrial development and progressivism, personally inaugurated ATIRA’s new campus in 1950.

John Bayley Fox, whom Sarabhai knew personally and wrote to, was a professor of industrial relations at HBS who had been named the dean of the new Office of Overseas Relations in 1955, and which hosted over 3000 visitors from 85 countries over the next eight years; Harry Hansen was the chariman of the HBS International Division and helped faculty members take part in international programs including in new business schools abroad (McDonald, 2017, pp. 230–231). Stanley Teele, who was the Dean of Harvard Business School from 1955 to his retirement in 1962 due to health reasons, was responsible for HBS’s increasing international connections. Like previous dean Donald K. David, Teele saw a “special responsibility” for HBS in helping the world’s poorest countries improve their conditions through management knowledge (McDonald, 2017, p. 255).

Fritz Roethlisberger, who knew Sarabhai personally, vouched for him and encouraged his colleagues to take on the project (Fox, 1961b). Roethlisberger and Fox had both met Sarabhai at different points – Fox met him at MIT and Roethlisberger in India, although it
excludes any further details about their meetings. The trip to India where Roethlisberger met Sarabhai does not appear elsewhere in the data, is not explained in greater detail, and no further information is available from online sources.

Roethlisberger’s papers are available at the Special Collections, but the finding aid for Roethlisberger’s correspondence did not list a subcategory under “India” or “Vikram Sarabhai”, although it did list a folder for Sarabhai’s close associate Kamla Chowdhry. From my own reading of other archived correspondence, I understood that Chowdhry’s association came later and that Sarabhai’s involvement was more important, especially in the initial stages of the creation of the Indian Institute of Management. At the same time, I decided that the prospect of spending time and effort searching through Roethlisberger’s correspondence for letters to Sarabhai would probably not return anything of value to this particular research project other than confirmation of what I already knew from the IIM Ahmedabad collection about Sarabhai’s interests in Human Resource Management. Therefore, I decided not to investigate this further.

Roethlisberger’s support for Sarabhai aside, Harry L. Hansen and Dean Stanley Teele were far more guarded in their enthusiasm, expressing their concerns to Thacker about the potential strain on Harvard’s ‘manpower’ and resources (Fox, 1961c) and the desirability of taking on an extra project abroad, especially when given the impression that UCLA might be willing to take on the project by the Ford Foundation – but openly acknowledging among their Harvard colleagues the importance of “doing something sizable in India” which would otherwise not be possible (Fox, 1961f) and the need for “moving with alacrity” (Hansen,
due to what was perceived as a rapidly growing need for trained managers in India. This view was succinctly expressed by George Lombard in a letter -

“Surely not taking advantage of this opportunity is, as your memorandum suggests, tantamount to a decision on the part of the School to do nothing in India at least for the next decade and possibly for the next generation.” (Lombard, 1961)

HBS’s relationship with India

Before I examine these letters in detail, I interject data from a memo from HBS’s Ad Hoc Committee on the School’s International Activities to Acting Dean George P. Baker on April 13, 1962. This memorandum contained a detailed internal overview of HBS’s relationship with India, referring to documents that I was unable to access myself. This document lays in the context for the correspondence and George Lombard’s comment.

According to the memo, Harvard Business School’s first significant event in a relationship with India happened in the fall of 1956, after recently-retired Dean Donald K. David made a round-the-world trip and remarked that four institutes were needed for business training in India during the course of his journey. This implicitly led to a meeting at the Ford Foundation offices in New York attended by Dean Stanley Teele and the Ford Foundation representative in India, Dr. Douglas Ensminger, with Ensminger requisitioning the report by Professors Meriam and Thurlby on establishing management training at the University of Bombay. The website of the archives of IIM Ahmedabad states that the Meriam-Thurlby survey was brought about by the request of Dr. Humayun Kabir of the
Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, which throws the question of whose initiative started the survey into some confusion.

Prof. Lincoln Gordon had suggested a major “institution-building job” in India in a November 25, 1957 memorandum to Dean concerned with “Harvard Business School Activities in the International Field”, but the June 2, 1959 meeting of the HBS Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) decided to postpone the idea of an intervention in India, and in a supplementary December 9, 1959 report understood that the involvement of both the MIT and UCLA in India made Harvard’s involvement in “institution-building” in India unnecessary. However, HBS continued to have an interest in India, with John Fox negotiating in 1959 to have Prof. Andrew R. Towl, the Director of Case Development, assigned to India to work with four Indian participants in the International Teachers Program upon their return to India. Although this deal fell through, Towl went to the Administrative Staff College at Hyderabad to advise the staff on case research and teaching based on a Ford Foundation proposal in 1960.

This placed Towl in a position to meet Mr. Tulsidas Kilachand of the Bombay business community, whose nephew was at the HBS and who was determined to let Bombay have a school of business administration (Towl, 1961). Kilachand’s insistence on having an institute at Bombay was dropped from the preserved record of conversations after Thacker made his support for the institute at Ahmedabad clear, and convinced Fox that getting Harvard involved in Ahmedabad was desirable. These exchanges were heavily dependent on the collegial style of relations within Harvard as well as amongst individuals associated with
Harvard, in which interpersonal connections implicitly determined what arguments were valid. Below is a letter from HBS professor A. R. Towl, based at the Administrative Staff College in Hyderabad, India to Fox dated April 5, 1961, discussing Kilachand’s visit.

Today Mr. Tulsidas Kilachand visited the College and spoke on the management of industry under the 3rd Five Year Plan. He recalls with appreciation the discussion with you about two years ago. I think his nephew is presently in the second year at HBS.

He is still determined to have a school of business administration in Bombay and is greatly disappointed that the Meriam-Thurlby report was not accepted by Bombay University and is even more disappointed that his effort to get Doug Ensminger to get Prof. Robbins here likewise has not resulted in a school of business administration for Bombay. He is still determined that Bombay should have an institution.

You may have heard or be hearing that Vickram[sic] Sarabhai was trying to get HBS substituted for UCLA as collaborated in the Ahmedabad Institute of Industrial Administration which the Ford Foundation is sponsoring as a companion to the one in Calcutta which will be conducted by M.I.T. … While it looks very improbable that Harvard should have another official contractual relationship, I have great admiration for the Ahmedabad Business Community and hope that some of our colleagues might be able to spend some time there eventually.

This letter demonstrates in a nutshell the importance of personal and familial connections amongst the international business elite being brought into existence here. It was
through family linkages – in this case, Kilachand’s nephew as an HBS MBA student (whose mention is double underlined) – that HBS was able to gain intelligence and extend influence, and Kilachand likewise able to build his, having discussed an unspecified matter with John Fox at an unspecified event and location sometime during 1959. Much like with his meeting with Sarabhai, Fox’s position allowed him, yet again, to meet with foreign correspondents with an interest in HBS. Kilachand’s own position as a member of business community in Bombay is evident in the letter, and from his own desire to have a school of business administration in Bombay.

The mention of Kilachand’s nephew ties in to HBS’s growing interest in its Indian graduates, relatively few though they might have been. Referring back to the material in the 1962 memo to George P. Baker, the first Indian graduate of HBS’s MBA program was in the class of 1948 (Ad Hoc Committee on Harvard Business School’s International Activities, 1962). Referencing the 1959 Alumni Directory, the authors of the memo noted that 36 Indians who had participated in one of the School’s programs were living in India, with one Indian having attended the Middle Management Program and two the Advanced Management Program. Likewise, three Indian professors had participated in the International Teachers Training Program and one Indian was in the School’s doctoral program and received his degree in 1957.

Although the data is pertinent to 1962 and not 1961, the Ad Hoc Committee noted that since 1955, eight teams consisting of 74 Indian business executives and governmental officials visited the School under the sponsorship of the United States Government, and 93
Indians visited the School as individuals (not team members). They also took note of Prakash L. Tandon, a recent Indian graduate of the Advanced Management Program and chairman of Hindustan Lever since 1961, who had just been appointed to the IIMA Board of Governors in 1962. Tandon was the Board’s Chairperson from 1964 to 1969 and is frequently mentioned in histories of IIM Ahmedabad as a key figure (Annabhai, 2011). Tandon was later quoted in strong support of the Indian Institutes of Management, as saying “That a developing country needs management even more than resources is now becoming abundantly clear to all students of growth” (Hill, Haynes, & Baumgartel, 1973). The mention of Kilachand’s nephew represents one of the attempts by HBS to cultivate its alumni connections to further its interests, something that they achieved in case of the highly-placed Tandon, who essentially concurred with their interests.

**Ford Foundation pressure and decision-making**

Further correspondence suggested that one or more officials at the Ford Foundation had misjudged the requests of their Indian counterparts and had tried to “ram through” a deal with the UCLA to fulfill their contractual obligations while covering their mistake, and meeting Sarabhai had confirmed that he preferred Harvard and had a workable plan for involving Harvard in Ahmedabad (Fox, 1961b, 1961d). Upon confirmation from UCLA Dean R.H. Hassler (whose name is often misspelled as “R.W. Hassler” in Harvard’s return correspondence to him) that the UCLA was not going to be involved with the Ahmedabad institute (Robbins, 1961), and considering the importance of having a connection to India
during the political climate of the period (1961), Stanley Teele and Harry Hansen chose to involve Harvard with Ahmedabad.

These letters reveal that the core decision to include Harvard in IIM Ahmedabad’s creation was taken by a handful of individuals and was influenced in terms of relatively narrow interests – a desire to have Harvard extend its influence in India ahead of rival universities, and a desire to be an influence in the growth of business administration as part of a broader American interest in India (Fox, 1961e, 1961b, 1961a). Fox’s memorandum of July 18 references John Kenneth Galbraith, former Harvard Professor and then-ambassador to India. In addition, Harvard connections are brought up repeatedly – with Kilachand’s nephew being at HBS, to an HBS alumnus being a business associate of Sarabhai’s ATIRA research institute, Kamla Chowdhry’s anticipated visit, to HBS connections to visiting American scholars in India. Government involvement – whether through Thacker’s visit or Sarabhai’s connections in Ahmedabad – was noted repeatedly.

The April 10, 1961 memorandum from John Fox to Associate Dean Russ Hassler detailed the entire set of events by summarizing the situation and Sarabhai and Thacker’s involvements. In addition to the intelligence about key figures at IIM Calcutta, the key takeaway is Fox’s conclusion that this would represent the last chance for Harvard to do something sizeable in India. In light of the previous HBS decisions not to be involved in India in a larger manner, this represents a major change in terms of their thinking: in part it appears to be motivated by the growth of Indian industrial development and a desire to influence it, which had not been necessary during the early 1950s due to limited industrial
development at the time but becomes puzzling in light of the importance given to industry during the formation of the Second Five-Year Plan, which had been widely publicized in the west (The liberal American interest in India’s Five-Year Plans during the 1950s and 1960s is explained in detail in Sackley (2004, 2015)). Thacker’s involvement as a representative of the Government of India and an extremely highly placed one at that is emphasized, with Hansen and Fox apparently willing to align their interests with his, as shown below -

Thacker’s real reason for coming to talk with us was to explore the possibility of Harvard’s interesting itself in some kind of relationship with the Institute of Administration at Ahmedabad. Harry Hansen very nicely joined us and he was present for all the conversations regarding this question with Thacker. Harry told his plans with Frank Folts to conduct an intensive program with the Bombay group lasting about ten days and starting around the 2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} or thereabouts of June. It seemed quite certain that Thacker would like to visit this program while it is in operation, but failing that he was most anxious for Harry to stop over in New Delhi after the program for further talks.

Thacker told us that two management institutes are at present contemplated. One is in Calcutta, with which apparently M.I.T. is already to go. Howard Johnson and a Professor Hill are the key figures. The only other similar institute at least for the moment will be in Ahmedabad and Thacker said that with the latter he hoped Harvard would be willing to furnish advice, staff and training facilities. The steps that he suggested that we take are as follows:
In the first place, he said that just as soon as Vikram Sarabhai arrived in Cambridge, which will be on or about April 27th, we should get in touch with one another and have preliminary discussions. Thacker wanted to make sure that Sarabhai as representing Ahmedabad really wished to have Harvard’s participation. This rather curious way of putting the thing was clarified I think by Andy Towl’s letter to me of April 5th where he tells me that Ahmedabad and the Ford Foundation are really involved with U.C.L.A. and that Sarabhai wants to have HBS substituted for U.C.L.A. This fact Thacker did not mention, but it was left that immediately after the conversations with Sarabhai, I should write, or someone from here should write to Thacker and tell him the results of these deliberations. Thacker was very anxious I think himself to have HBS in a relationship with Ahmedabad and he said that the next step, provided Sarabhai and we agreed, would be to have someone from Harvard come out to India for about a month and study the situation first hand.

It would seem to me that we have between now and Sarabhai’s arrival time to decide whether this is something we want to have something to do with or not. If we do decide that we are interested, I think we should then try to agree among ourselves just how we would like to proceed before we talk with Sarabhai. I suppose it would be a little overdramatic to say this may be our last chance to do something sizeable in India, but I am rather inclined to think that we may not have another chance for some years and so I would guess we would want to think this through quite carefully.
I do not know what more to add. **Clearly Thacker himself is a highly intelligent person. He seems to move around just under the level of prime ministers and what not.** Harry and I both wanted to tell him a little bit about HBS, but he felt that he had followed our programs closely and knew enough about our philosophy and approach so that he was convinced that Harvard could perform a very important role at Ahmedabad. He was interested in Harry’s activities in the Philippines, especially the forthcoming four man research group.

Finally, Thacker stressed the point that whatever developed in Ahmedabad would be an effort combining the Ford Foundation, the business community, the Government of India, and Harvard. Incidentally[sic], both Calcutta and Ahmedabad draw on all of India for their student body, but Thacker stressed what I think we already know a bit about; namely, the emergence of a dynamic professional class of business managers in the Ahmedabad area.

Notice how Fox repeatedly brings up key interests and decision points for HBS over the course of the letter.

Harry Hansen’s April 11, 1961 letter to Dean Stanley Teele(Hansen, 1961) also demonstrates a growing desire to act in haste regarding the “situation in India” demonstrating HBS’s own interests in the area, although some of the points are vague without knowledge of the previous HBS discussions regarding India. One of the points emphasized here is that Thacker represented himself and others informally in India rather than coming in his capacity as a high-ranking representative of the Government of India.
The discussion leads me to conclude that a time has been reached when we will have to “fish or cut bait” in any major role in India.

The essence of the matter is that the Indian government has decided to have two management institutes in India at Calcutta and Ahmedabad. MIT is to advise and assist in the Calcutta operation. Professor Thacker, representing himself and others informally in India, wants Harvard to do the other.

Although much is made of Thacker’s official position in the Government of India, Hansen’s letter to Teele makes it clear that his representation was on an informal basis. Hansen does not elaborate on who the “others” are, but Thacker himself was a part of the family-based Ahmedabad business community. The following decisions to “move with some alacrity” refer to the 1956 trip by Donald K. David and his impression that four institutes needed to be established in India, and 1957 a reference to the Meriam-Thurlby report (Ad Hoc Committee on Harvard Business School’s International Activities, 1962). HBS apparently should not be seen as intruding on the positions of MIT and UCLA when both of them were already engaged in India; with the change in situation caused by a greater identified need for business education in India, and the absence of the UCLA, the next decision was to move to prevent HBS from falling behind MIT. It also includes an identification of HBS’s corporate interests in conducting research on multinational companies and influencing their growth and development -
Once these two institutes are established nothing further of major scope is planned.

Since 1956 and 1957 the situation in India with regard to management training has greatly changed. Where once we properly dragged our heels I think now we should move, and move with some alacrity. If we do not we may not have the decision about India to make in the future and in view of MIT’s move I would expect we might regret this.

I have a special interest in view of our multinational company proposals. A “base” in India could be of great benefit for future research. It would of course be of a different nature than our Philippine “base” but it would open up similar research opportunities. I think it is worth pointing out that research directly on the multinational company must be accompanied by some research on the industrial infrastructure within which the multinational company operates. (See for instance C. Wickham Skinner’s current DBA thesis “Production Management of U.S. Manufacturing Subsidiaries in Turkey” for a review of the significances of the industrial infrastructure. ) An Indian base would greatly assist this.

What should we do? I would suggest that when Vikram Sarabhar[sic] is here at the end of April that:

1. We should express a sincere interest in Ahmedabad.
2. Depending upon these discussions you should be prepared to fly to India this summer or fall to make a high-level size up of the situation.

3. We should seek to get a cadre of Indians here next fall in our ITP[note: International Teachers Program] who would be associated in the development of the activity.

4. We should send back with them in the summer of 1962 a chief advisor with a younger man as a case writing director, and recruit from the 1961-1962 class a small group of case writers to go with them. (There is, as you know, a growing interest among our students in being “of use” overseas in developing countries. We can both see some very useful ways to prepare a group such as our Filipino group for an Indian venture.)

5. We should commit ourselves to conducting a summer AMP under the Institutes sponsorship for a period of 3-5 years.

I don’t believe that such a program would be a real drain on the School because it helps keep our major contribution in the summer. On the contrary it would enhance our international image and open up a significant new research area for the multinational center.

Based on these documents, it appears that key actors at HBS were seeking to legitimize its interests in terms of the global political environment, as I examine later with respect to the memo of April 13, 1962, although this is one of the less common instances
within the correspondence that links the proposed involvement with the IIM with existing plans in other countries (in this case, the Philippines). Therefore, I have used dashed underlines to mark the Filipino/multinational company suggestions. A direct connection between the IIM and their project in the Philippines appears not to have manifested even if it was in their interests.

Enhancing Harvard’s image is a point that is implicit and rarely emphasized as it is in the last paragraph, but some measure of what Harvard must be seen as associating with is the repeated mentions of Thacker’s importance: Harvard Business School must be seen as acting in concert with a man close to the centers of power in a major nation. The memorandum from Russ Hassler to Teele on April 13, 1961 brings up Thacker’s position yet again in the last paragraph, while also emphasizing the possibility that UCLA might be in a position to be involved in Ahmedabad, and therefore exclude Harvard from influence.

At your suggestion I talked to George Robbins on April 12 about his and UCLA’s interest in and connections with the Indian Institutes of Management.

As you know, George went to India last year for the Ford Foundation to make a study of India’s needs for management education. In his report to the Foundation George suggested one institute. He suggested that the institute not be connected with any university. The Indian government wanted two institutes or centers, and early proposed Calcutta and Bombay. He tells me that the Ford Foundation has now agreed to the creation of two institutes to be run by the Indian government with Ford Foundation financial support. The Ford Foundation and the Indian government have
already completed an agreement with M.I.T. to operate an institute at Calcutta. The
location for the other institute has now been fixed for Ahmedabad. George tells me
that the Indian government has requested UCLA to run the Ahmedabad Institute and
the Ford Foundation has agreed. He says that his position and the position of UCLA
at this point is that they have not made up their mind whether they should or should
not do this. He would like to have one of his staff spend six weeks studying the
problems involved before UCLA makes up its mind whether to accept the request
from the Indian government.

George says that there is considerable political maneuvering going on between
various Indian officials. He thinks, however, that when the chips are down the Ford
Foundation will decide what school, etc. He points out that Thacker, whom he knows
quite well, has asked George to be the Director of the Ahmedabad school and for
UCLA to be the sponsoring U.S. school. George has turned down Thacker’s request
to be the director. He says that Thacker is the man who heads the research and
development activities of India.

An April 18, 1961 letter from John Fox to George Lombard brings up two HBS
professors in India, whose significance I bring up in discussion section. The themes of this
letter are familiar, with emphasis on Thacker’s position (and bringing up the support of the
Government of India this time), the need to make a decision and the importance of the
decision, and alumni connections both present and future.
The next weeks will certainly present the school with a unique opportunity for helping in the development of an important leadership training program in India.

1. Rolf and Ronnie Lynton, who have been running the Aloka program, will be visiting the school during the latter part of Vikram Sarabhai’s visit next month. So far as I know, their future plans are not settled. But whether they are or not, their and Sarabhai’s presence at the same time will bring together here at the School the small number of people who have (a) high interest in, (b) high competence for, and (c) high familiarity with the problem of leadership training in India. At the same time, these people are (d) highly motivated to do something about it; and I placed highly enough in organizations in India to effect a worthwhile program – we now know as a result of your conversations with Professor Thacker – with the backing of the Government of India.

Surely not taking advantage of this opportunity is, as your memorandum suggests, tantamount to a decision on the part of the School to do nothing in India at least for the next decade and possibly for the next generation.

2. Another tie which the School has with these efforts is through Mr. T. J. Sethi, MBA 1958. He is a member of a family important in the management of a large textile firm in India (8,000 employees). I infer that this firm is a contributor to ATIRA, Sarabhai’s research and training institute at Ahmedabad.
3. Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Head of the Department of Human Relations at ATIRA, will be working with the Organizational Behavior group here at the school next year.

HBS sought to connect using its existing network of professors, and keeping an eye on working together with the Government of India, rather than aiming for the business community in general. The key decision, as I emphasize above, was to establish contacts with India or to lack any influence in India for a significant period of time afterwards. Fox identifies an HBS alumnus, T. J. Sethi, who belongs to a family-run large textile firm and contributes to Sarabhai’s ATIRA. I will briefly examine the involvement of professors Rolf and Harriet (Ronnie) Lynton in a later section.

Some confusion ensured when business history professor Henrietta Larson appeared with a Sloan fellow at MIT named Nanabhoy Davar, who wished to talk to Hansen because of Hansen’s familiarity with the latter’s brother, who was in charge of a business college in Bombay. It is evident from the double underlined portions in this and the previous letter that connections, even personal connections are important to Harvard faculty. The letter, dated April 18, 1961, raised some confusion about whether Sarabhai was misleading them, and whether UCLA was to be establishing the Ahmedabad institute after all.
Dear Stan:

Just after leaving you Henrietta Lawson[sic] appeared with a Mr. Nanabhoy Davar who is a Sloan Fellow at MIT and who comes from Bombay. He wanted to see me since I know his brother who runs a business college in Bombay.

Mr. Nanabhoy Davar reported:

1. “that MIT’s effort in Calcutta is to build an institution giving MBA degrees.”
2. “that California” was to do the same in Ahmedabad.

**Correspondence from Sarabhai’s May 3rd visit and afterwards**

The memorandum displayed below was sent to Dean Teele from John Fox on the 4th of May, 1961 regarding Sarabhai’s visit on the 3rd of May, in which Sarabhai was judged and found to be an entirely honest man. Although Sarabhai was coming in the role of a supplicant, he was also a man with his own agenda, determined to have Harvard Business School mentor the institution at Ahmedabad. Neither this letter nor any of the previous letters give any reasons for why Sarabhai chose to have HBS as the institution of his choice, and if the matter did come up during the discussion, it was never reported by Hansen, Fox or any others who met him. For the purposes of everyone in HBS, the prospect of casting any critical judgment of the school’s position with respect to other business schools is never brought up, and therefore there is no truly critical discussion of why Sarabhai and Thacker approached HBS in the first place, or what they intend to gain from their association with
Harvard that they would not gain with UCLA; the hidden line of thinking appears to be that the Indian representatives approached HBS due to it being, unquestionably, “the best”.

On Wednesday morning, May 3rd, from approximately 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai of the Physical Research Laboratory at Ahmedabad discussed with Professors Roethlisberger and Hansen and myself the question of Harvard participation in the development of programs of business administration at Ahmedabad.

Perhaps it is in order in the first place to make a few general remarks. From the outset it was apparent that Sarabhai was not trying to hide anything from us. There was nothing devious about either his behavior or his remarks. He was entirely frank and open at all time.

Sarabhai is an extremely competent person and was visiting us as a representative of the Ahmedabad group which is concerning itself with the establishment of programs in business administration at this location. It will be recalled that when Professor Thacker was here, which was reported to you in my memorandum of April 10th and Professor Hansen’s memorandum of April 11th, Professor Thacker was representing the Government of India. Thacker was unable though to speak for Ahmedabad and
asked us to talk with Sarabhai to see if he, Thacker, was correct in his assumption that Sarabhai representing the Ahmedabad group would request Harvard’s assistance.

It was completely clear in the conversation that Sarabhai was asking Harvard in a formal manner to talk on the development of business administration programs at Ahmedabad. For the purposes of his first visit, Sarabhai asked us to assume for a moment if we would that U.C.L.A. was not involved and said he thought that this was a reasonable assumption because in his judgment the Indians should have something to say about what institution or institutions should be invited to give assistance.

The above paragraph is especially important because it, like Sarabhai’s first letter, contradicts the postcolonial notion that Indian educators blindly copied American management education or were forced to accept American methods as a ‘subaltern’. In this instance, the Indian in question, Vikram Sarabhai, had an agenda of his own and made his choice of business school accordingly.

Sarabhai suggests that approximately ten Indians should be selected and sent to Harvard for special training in research techniques, teaching methods, and some background in area specialization. He suggests that two or three Harvard faculty members at any one time be present in India for varying lengths of time …while I do not think Sarabhai ever became completely definite in this respect… clearly he has
done some thinking about how to proceed, I think at the same time he is very much open to suggestions and would be completely reasonable...

There seems to be now doubt now but what there are to be two centers for business administration established in India. One is to be in Calcutta and M.I.T. has already assumed the responsibility for the development there. Sarabhai realizes that Ensminger would like to have U.C.L.A. do the Ahmedabad project. Sarabhai regards Ensminger as more of a politician, as he puts it, than an objective scientific representative of a foundation. Sarabhai was not clear why Ensminger seemed to be rather unenthusiastic about Harvard … it is clear that Sarabhai and the Ahmedabad group do not intend to allow the Ford Foundation to force them into a relationship with U.C.L.A until they have at least discovered that Harvard is unable to assume the task.

It is noteworthy that Sarabhai’s misgivings about Ensminger are described frankly in this letter, and other documentary evidence suggests that Sarabhai’s complaints have some substance to them. In a September 24, 1965 letter to Mr. John Cowles of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, Ensminger would derogatorily compare India and Pakistan to squabbling teenagers lacking the maturity of “older nations” (referring to the war going on between both countries in 1965), and expressed distaste for how Pakistan had been armed by the United States to fight communism but chose to fight India instead – among other observations that betray a patronizing and racist attitude and a deeper lack of comprehension of the dynamic
between both countries. Sarabhai also noted the difficulty of getting sponsorship for advanced management courses, information that was used to drive home the need for Harvard to be active in Ahmedabad.

We explored … the possibility and usefulness of Harvard’s continuing to give short courses of an advanced management type. Sarabhai said that he did not question the usefulness of such courses, but he felt it would be extremely difficult for Harvard to find any sponsorship in India because as he pointed out the All Indian Management Association with Ford Foundation assistance was putting on the program conducted by M.I.T. in Kashmir and that the I.L.O. in connection with the Indian National Productivity Centers was putting on two weak programs for vice presidents. There are two other bodies that might conceivably be willing to assist in this connection, but they appeared to Sarabhai as being a little off the direct line.

The above activities plus the activity in Calcutta and Ahmedabad I interpret as meaning that if we wish to do anything in India in the foreseeable future, we must take up the Ahmedabad affair. This is no different from the conclusion that was reached in conversation with Thacker where both Harry and I felt that this was the last opportunity that would be offered to the Harvard Business School so far as India is concerned for the next decade or so.
I include sections from the chronological summary sent by John Fox to Teele on May 15, 1961 because the information contained clarifies the relationships between Sarabhai and Thacker, as well as between Sarabhai and Fox and Roethlisberger. It also contains information not explicit in the May 4th letter – that Sarabhai had intended to follow up matters with the Ford Foundation if Harvard indicated its interest in Ahmedabad.

Vikram A. Sarabhai, prominent member of the Ahmedabad business community and Director of the Physical Research Laboratory at Ahmedabad, requesting John Fox to talk with Professor M.S. Thacker, Director General of Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India and Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, New Delhi, India. Sarabhai’s letter tells us that Thacker is to be at the M.I.T. Centennial Celebrations and asks us to invite him over to the Business School. Letter also says that he, Sarabhai, would like to have assistance from HBS in the development of the Ahmedabad Institute. Copies of this letter to F. J. Roethlisberger and Thacker. Sarabhai is both a professional and personal friend of F. J. Roethlisberger, who met him in India, and Sarabhai also known to J. Fox and Roethlisberger during an earlier visit to M.I.T. when he evidenced much interest in HBS.

Thacker visits HBS and talks with Professor Harry L. Hansen and J. Fox for two hours on April 8th. Professor Roethlisberger absent only because of illness. Thacker wishes to explore with HBS the possibility of HBS interesting itself in working with
Institute at Ahmedabad. He tells us a little bit about the recommendation that two
management institutes are to be established, one in Calcutta with M.I.T. support,
where Dean Johnson and Professor Hill of M.I.T. are the key figures. Thacker also
made it clear that until we had met with Sarabhai late in April and had from Sarabhai
the assurance that Ahmedabad was anxious for Harvard’s participation, there was
nothing further to be done, except it was clear that the Government of India would
like to have HBS participate. Thacker asked that we write him after we had talked
with Sarabhai and let him know if Sarabhai did request HBS participation. The
Institute at Ahmedabad would be a joint effort concerning the Ford Foundation, the
business community of Ahmedabad, the local state and the Indian government and
both the Institute at Calcutta and the Institute at Ahmedabad would draw on all of
India for their students.

… Meeting with Dr. Vikram Sarabhai on May 3rd for two hours and one-half. Present
were Professors Hansen and Roethlisberger and J. Fox. Sarabhai representing the
Ahmedabad community makes a formal request to HBS to participate in the
development of business administration programs at Ahmedabad and asks that as
soon as possible Harvard indicate whether or not it is interested in following up this
request. Sarabhai tells us a little as to why Bombay was dropped and Ahmedabad
substituted. Also tells us of the favorable impressions he has of the Robbins report
and implies that if Harvard says it is interested, he will then follow matters up with
the Ford Foundation.
Letter from John Fox to Harry Hansen dated June 5, 1961 – Fox mentions that he received information that the Ford Foundation was trying to get Sarabhai and Prof. Tom Hill of the MIT to talk to Robbins at the UCLA, and that Sarabhai had not gone to Los Angeles on his own initiative as Teele had been led to believe (from the Ford Foundation in New York). This was taken as a confirmation of Roethlisberger’s defense of Sarabhai and as a reason to trust him when they earlier had significant reason to question his character and intentions-

This did, however, I think without question confirm the position that Fritz had taken all along that Vikram himself was not seeking to develop negotiations with U.C.L.A. at all. You will recall that as a result of Stan’s meetings in New York, he obtained the impression that Vikram had already gone to U.C.L.A., probably on his own initiative, and this made some of us wonder momentarily if Vikram wasn’t carrying water on both shoulders. To this of course Fritz took strong exception, maintaining all along what I think is clear to all of us now that Vikram is an entirely reliable individual and is simply interested in trying to find out if HBS would be willing to undertake the development of the Ahmedabad Institute.

Most important is the section below, which emphasizes the fact that Sarabhai had a choice in the matter and that he had actively chosen to push back against the Ford
Foundation’s interests in seeking the involvement of the HBS. It also, significantly, shows that the Ford Foundation was dependent upon Sarabhai for the fulfillment of their interests and had no alternative but to make amends for not taking Sarabhai’s desires into account when trying to push through their contract with the UCLA.

During the conversation, which lasted one hour, it seemed to me at least that it was quite clear that the Ford Foundation had in effect tried to ram through a contract with U.C.L.A. and had to a very considerable extent either not consulted or ignored the feelings of the people in Ahmedabad.

In fact there is some reason to believe that the Ford Foundation had gone so far and so fast in this direction that now when they found the Ahmedabad people had different ideas, they were attempting to get involved in a kind of fence mending operation. I would guess that there is also a complication of this sort; namely, that U.C.L.A., which incidently has until July 1st to decide whether or not they will take up the contract or not, according to Culbertson is rather reluctant to go ahead if the Ahmedabad group is either not interested in U.C.L.A. or more difficult still, does not want them.

It would also appear that the Ford Foundation is trying to maneuver, which is the best word I can think of, Vikram into changing his mind in this respect and letters from Coleman, Ensminger’s assistant in New Delhi, to Vikram and the idea of Vikram
going to U.C.L.A. seem to bear this out. Vikram has shown to Stan, to me, and to Fritz a letter that Coleman wrote him and his reply which confirms this position.

The account above provides further evidence showing the agency available to Indians in choosing Western mentorship, which contradicts the previous broad claims about the dependency of Indians and lack of choice in accepting American management education.

Next I proceed to two memoranda, one sent from Harry Hansen to Stanley Teele on June 30th, and another from Fox to Teele on July 13th (the date is not directly available but is implicit from Fox’s letter to Hansen on July 13th). I include a part of the memorandum from Fox to Teele on July 18th to give a sense of what documents passed between the three men.

Since I was not able to find copies of these memoranda in the Special Collections, their contents remain unknown to me, although Fox describes them in the following section as “self-explanatory”.

Dear Stan:

Harry as you know sent me a copy of his memorandum of June 30th addressed to you.

I had written a rather long letter to him which I do not think he ever received, because we sent it to India and while theoretically it had time to reach him, my hunch is that if
he had received it, he would have at least dropped me a note. I am therefore planning to send him a copy of the letter which I happen to have on hand and to which I have added a couple of paragraphs. This letter is attached and if you feel that it is all right to send out along with a copy of my memo to you, fine; however, maybe you feel that what I have said needs either to be changed or expanded.

Fox reconsidered the idea of making the quickest impact on the Indian economy through an Advanced Management Program, although Sarabhai had explicitly pointed out the difficulty in sponsorship during the May 3rd meeting. From John B. Fox’s letter to Harry Hansen of July 13th, 1961 -

… while I am satisfied that probably the only way to make the quickest impact on the Indian economy is through an Advanced Management Program, I do share the opinions of both Robbins and Sarabhai that training at this level must be accompanied quite quickly, say in two or three years, with a longer program in business administration for young Indians. If the Indian economy is growing at the rate people say it is, it would seem to me that the acute shortages are going to show up very soon in the middle and lower management areas and it would seem to me that our proposal for our Advanced Management effort would be considerably strengthened if we made some mention of our awareness of the emerging needs of these other two levels.
The detailed memorandum to Stanley F. Teele from John Fox dated July 18, 1961 explained the situation on the basis of the previous missing memoranda, seeking to contact UCLA dean George Robbins in order to determine whether or not they would be able to proceed in India. Although the suggestions that were raised by Harry L. Hansen are not included here (the memorandum is missing from this collection for unknown reasons and the passages above demonstrate how confusing it is to make sense of its contents), the major decision at this juncture involves an alignment of their interests – the greatest impact of Harvard Business School (which the faculty identify with as “we” and “us”) and the Indian government’s willingness to follow the recommendations of the Robbins Report, juxtaposed against their own resource constraints. It is also exceedingly evident that HBS at no point wants to be seen as usurping the position of UCLA.

It was my understanding that U.C.L.A. would make a decision whether or not to go ahead with their exploration and implementation of the Institute of Business Administration by July 1st. It would seem to me that the simplest way to proceed would be to have Russ, who knows George Robbins probably better than any of us, call George and see what the decision was. If U.C.L.A. is going to go ahead alone then I think Harry’s last paragraph should be discussed and we should decide whether or not we want to start correspondence with Galbraith. However, if U.C.L.A. has turned the matter down, then I suppose we should expect that the Ford Foundation might be in touch with us either to go in on a joint basis with other U.S. business schools or to do certainly what I think Vikram would prefer; namely, to take the
whole project by ourselves. However, clearly the latter possibility is something that once again would have to be discussed very fully particularly with Harry’s comments about the problems surrounding this kind of undertaking.

I think from all this that you can see I am in a state of confusion which I do not seem able to resolve. One way of stating this is – should we go ahead and follow up Harry’s suggestions and do what we think is most suitable at the moment and which undoubtedly would be effective and have an impact or – two, should we try to follow through on the recommendations of the Robbins’ Report, which clearly has the support of the Indian government and certainly impressed as far as we know quite a number of Indian businessmen and educators.

Although HBS had dropped the idea of establishing a business school in India, it chose to consider the idea seriously after Sarabhai and Thacker approached them and considering the influence that both men had in the Indian government. It is not specified whether the change in conditions in India involved industrial development during the Second Five Year Plan at the time, or whether it was a reference to the support of Sarabhai and Thacker and the Ahmedabad business community. However, at the same time, they appear to have been very wary of appearing overeager to take on UCLA’s position. The reason for their caution is not explicit but it may have been an attempt to keep HBS’s image as elevated as possible, both in terms of not making HBS appear unduly needy and therefore in a superior position as well as avoiding any controversy with the UCLA.
The memorandum also raised the potential involvement of Ken (John Kenneth) Galbraith, Harvard faculty member and at the time the American ambassador to India, although the suggestions made by Hansen concerning him are not brought up in this letter. Although the letter seems to suggest on the face of it that they were willing to ask Galbraith to intervene, the care taken in not appearing desirous of UCLA’s position suggests that they would seek an alternative to mentoring the institute at Ahmedabad. Due to the importance of Galbraith’s position as the highest ranking American diplomat in India, I include the paragraph referring to him later in the discussion section, in a separate analysis of his involvement with the IIM.

**Memo to Acting Dean George P. Baker on April 13, 1962**

I found additional context for the decisions taken at Harvard Business School to expedite involvement in India in a memorandum to Acting Dean George P. Baker on April 13, 1962, the contents of which are extensive and situate the decisions being taken in the political and ideological environment of the Cold War. The memo, a largely complete transcription which I include in appendices, quotes several previous documents in explaining Harvard’s relationship to India (Ad Hoc Committee on Harvard Business School’s International Activities, 1962).
The memorandum gives the impression of having collated all material relevant to Harvard’s prior connections with India. I considered the possibility of evaluating the documents mentioned by the authors on the Ad Hoc committee on the School’s International Activities myself, but I chose not to do so in the end. First, I did not know where the source documents were stored within the Special Collections and it was not evident where to do so from an online search of the records. Neither did I know if any of the documents had been excluded from storage, or were restricted. A more thorough and exhaustive search for documents that may have been restricted, difficult to obtain or stored amongst large quantities of unrelated material would likely result in a large waste of time, possible for little gain. Since the memorandum of April 13th was already highly detailed and quoted extensively from the relevant portions of the source documents, I judged searching for the source documents unnecessary and potentially counterproductive. The relevant sections follow below.

The April 13 memo begins with two recommendations. It first recommends that HBS undertake a five-year program of association with IIM Ahmedabad provided that the Dean is satisfied that sufficient manpower is available to discharge HBS’s obligation. The second recommendation is for the establishment of a center or institute “to help the School to move in an evolutionary manner into a position of global comprehension and influence with regard to management concepts, policies and practices throughout the world”, and it emphasizes that the success of HBS’s association with Ahmedabad is absolutely dependent on that of the
proposed center or institute to the point that a vote for one is a vote for the other (emphasized in the original in block letters).

Regarding the second recommendation, no such center or institute was established. I revisit the matter of the proposed center after showing passages that demonstrate the historical international context in which HBS’s involvement with IIM Ahmedabad was undertaken.

I first include the section of Lincoln Gordon’s November 25, 1957 memorandum to the Dean (Stanley Teele) concerned with “Harvard Business School Activities in the International Field” which suggested that HBS could make the most impact in “Asian, African and Latin American countries” through what is described as a “major institution-building job” (the term “institution-building notably recurs as the title of Hill, Haynes and Baumgartel(1973), “Institution Building in India”.)

In relation to basic needs and greatest opportunities for contributions to our own programs, to the service of the American business community, and to the national interest, I would suggest attempting, in the first instance, two such enterprises. One would be in Spanish-speaking Latin America, and an effort should be made to give it more than national character. Although the best location for this purpose would require careful exploration, Mexico probably offers as favorable an environment as any. The second such institution should almost certainly be in India. This would not
have a more than national character (although perhaps ultimately other South and Southeast Asians might find their way there), but it would be in a country of continental dimensions whose future development is of the greatest significance. Despite the formal hostility of the government to private enterprise, there is a strong business community and the prospects for its future growth are good if the general development effort can be kept from collapsing. More and better management talent is one of the keys to this, and it is a crying need in publicly owned enterprises such as the railroads and utility systems as well as in private business.

Harvard’s interest in India is clearly stated to be a contribution to the service of the American business community and the American national interest. India’s importance is made explicit, as is the desire to support the Indian business community. Included is the importance of countering the further development of communism, which is all but stated as the American “national interest”. For context, Gordon’s memorandum took place in the time period of the early Cold War under the Eisenhower administration (1952-1960), which actively sought to establish military alliances across the world to prevent further communist spread.

The Eisenhower administration, like the Truman administration before it, was known to have been very reluctant to provide aid to India, due to the impression among many Republican members of Congress that India was fundamentally a communist country or that helping India would be a waste of US taxpayer money(Sackley, 2004, pp. 50–57). The
emphasis on Indian development rather than on aid follows from the predominant view among American liberals at the time, which in turn follows from the line of argument used by former United States Ambassador to India Chester Bowles, who pushed for a superior policy regarding development as a means to meet the challenges of the Cold War (Sackley, 2004, pp. 57–59). Rising nationalism in the Middle East and events like the Suez Crisis of 1956 further bolstered the liberal argument for “positive intervention” (Sackley, 2004, p. 277). Additionally, on October 4, 1957 the Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1, which increased Soviet prestige internationally and sparked fears about Soviet scientific superiority in the United States. Although an explicit connection is not stated in the available data, the November 1957 date suggests that Harvard faculty and administration may have been motivated to reassess the need for international activity as a result of the heightened fears of the time.

The importance of India is stressed again in the May 25, 1959 Interim Report to the Personnel Planning Committee by the Task Force Committee on International Management Training. I exclude less relevant sections in ellipses [...].

The other major underdeveloped regions are Asia, Africa and the Near East [...] we have discussed over recent years various proposals for assistance on management training in India [...] The importance of India as the largest underdeveloped free nation and as a bellwether for other extremely poor countries anxious to improve their conditions rapidly is self-evident [...]

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The logic of helping India is the same as that outlined by the Truman administration in 1950-51 as a consequence of the “Fall of China” to Communism (Sackley, 2004, pp. 50–52). The April 13 memo quotes the two following paragraphs from the “Report on the Criteria to be Applied in Connection with Faculty Participation in Outside Programs (Revision of April 11, 1956)” as a matter of “general policy interest in connection with the [IIM] project” which I include below.

An understanding of the fundamentals of the administrative process can be greatly enlarged by acquaintance with administrative problems in different contexts. Such activity offers interested persons the opportunity to identify those aspects of administration which are common to all efforts to organize people for a complex collective task. When the program is a foreign one, it is also likely to create a more vivid understanding of the special characteristics of the American society which are relevant to business administration in this country. Improved understanding of all these kinds can be brought to bear at the Harvard Business School both on our management training and our business research activities.

On the broader front, the committee feels that the University and the School have a positive responsibility to participate in the effort to strengthen the free world through the development of capable and socially responsible economic leadership at home and abroad. Without competent administration, efforts to improve standards of living
will be only partly successful. Without social responsibility on the part of administrators, the gains of increased efficiency will not be shared fairly.

The clear responsibility offered is to strengthen the “free world” – a Cold War term that has been uncritically used within American rhetoric of the period to divide the world into a “Manichean duality” of the “free world” (the US and its allies) and the “unfree world” (The USSR and other communist states), placing India in the former category. This memo places Harvard Business School within the international framework of the highly dualistic US foreign policy of the era and makes it a part of that foreign policy in being an active participant, which becomes more evident with the concluding paragraphs below. HBS interests in spreading US management education are simultaneously linked to increasing knowledge about administration in general as well as with domestic and international US interests in promoting free-market capitalism and fighting communism. In addition, the authors of this document appear to seek a greater understanding of American exceptionalism, implicit in the phrase “…more vivid understanding of the special characteristics of the American society…”. I also include the two paragraphs concluding from this section of the report, because they set up HBS’s interests and potential courses of action both in the sense of the “practical” benefits to both HBS in terms of knowledge gained and to India in terms of meeting the demand for managers, as well as “more than academic interest”.

With these broad policy statements in mind, it is appropriate to state simply the benefits which can accrue from the proposed association with the Ahmedabad Institute. In the most immediate and practical sense the Indians, in great need for
skilled managers, can gain from our experience in management training. In the same sense, and from our point of view, with the growing world nature of United States business, the School’s Faculty can enlarge its understanding of foreign environments and operating conditions. Few other, if any, of the world’s economically underdeveloped countries provide as challenging an opportunity as does India in which to study management in an evolving industrial society. Not only is India a major country of the world, but it is industrializing by means of a planned blending of the public and private sectors of its economy. Thus both the scale and nature of the methods used invite study.

The first concluding paragraph establishes the importance of India and its potential role in studying new management techniques, implying that India as a country had much to offer HBS – rather than the one-way transfer of knowledge assumed by postcolonial theorists. It is evident from the context of this document that HBS acknowledged a genuine academic interest in any new knowledge that could be obtained from India.

But there is more than academic interest involved. India is the world’s largest democracy: The People’s Republic of China is the world’s largest Communist country. Both are economically underdeveloped. Each has chosen different means to obtain economic growth, and there is an inevitable competition between these two powers which is being watched closely by other countries with substantial economic growth needs. If we accept the proposition that the Free World cannot afford to have India fail under a democratic system, and this is indeed a tenable proposition, it is
most important that the institutions of the Free World, of which we are one, examine carefully their opportunities to help Indian economic growth. If we can at this School make a contribution, it behooves us to do it for we and the Indians are in effect today each other’s keeper.

This second concluding paragraph makes the Cold War interests in the 1956 report even more explicit, drawing direct comparisons to China and explicitly acknowledging a need for HBS to intervene in preventing India from failing under a democratic system (and thereby becoming a communist country), with the fear of India turning communist being a part of the “Domino Theory” that demanded American intervention in preventing any further spread of communism, for fear that the communist takeover of one country would result in the further spread of communism across the “third world”, with India’s role in this system being high as the largest democracy. These pertinent points on the memo echo the American liberal agenda of the importance of India in the Cold War as a free counterpoint to China, complete with the support of planned economic development as advocated by a number of prominent liberal economists including then-ambassador Galbraith(Sackley, 2004, 2015). The conclusion that “we and the Indians are in effect today each other’s keeper” directly equates HBS’s interests in making a contribution with American foreign policy interests in maintaining India’s democratic status.

Despite the powerfully worded emphasis on the creation of an institute or center at the IIM, no such institute exists or is known to have existed. The original text makes clear the explicitly political nature of such a center(Ad Hoc Committee on Harvard Business School’s
International Activities, 1962, p. 16) and the importance of a center to Harvard activities in
general, rather than Harvard Business School alone. In this instance, I retain the descriptions
of centers even though only the Center for International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute
of Technology was directly and extensively involved with India (Sackley, 2004).

[…] the School is well located with regard to other centers of international activities
such as at Harvard, the Center for International Affairs, the Center for Middle Eastern
Studies, the East Asian Research Center, and the Committee on Inter-American
Affairs; at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Center for International
Studies; and at Boston University, the African Studies Program. There is little
question that a center or institute at the Harvard Business School concerned with
management studies would benefit greatly from the broad economic, political, and
cultural approaches of these Centers.

With particular reference to Harvard University, shortly after World War II, the
School began to develop a relationship with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies
with members of our Faculty contributing their services to the committee of this
Center. Somewhat similar relations have existed from time to time with the East
Asian Research Center, and more recently we have participated with the Center for
International Affairs and the Committee on Inter-American Affairs. But the full
benefits that could be derived from such relationships have not been obtained because
we lacked an organization that could draw on these Centers for instructional
purposes, research guidance, and advice flowing from their knowledge of historical, cultural and political areas.

There is the possibility that the opportunity for these Centers to make an extraordinary intellectual contribution could be enhanced by facilitating their communication through the proposed center or institute with key decision-makers, men in public and private firms throughout the world. A university is dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the development of new knowledge, and the responsibility, perhaps in the case of Harvard, is one of helping preserve not only our national heritage but also our Western heritage. Through its professional schools, in particular this School which is concerned with the development of men of affairs or practitioners, the University can pass on its findings in a new channel to men whose decisions affect the direction of many lives.

The foreign policy implications of establishing such a center become evident in the above passage; the establishment of a center dealing with India would help tie HBS far more strongly to both the Indian public and private sectors, which have been emphasized in prior passages, along with essential historical, cultural and political knowledge. The phrase “helping preserve not only our national heritage but also our Western heritage” suggests both a colonial civilizing mission but also an attempt at preventing Western heritage from being disrupted by an implicit “Eastern” – communist threat.

Additionally, the correspondence contains an attempt to link village development, identified by Sackley (2004, 2011, 2013) as a major field of interest for the Ford Foundation
in its attempts at preventing communist influence in India to the field of business management. This letter was from the England-based development economist Prof. Maurice Zinkin to Harry Hansen on 7th February 1964, claiming that Indian managers had an inaccurate view of their society and particularly of village society (Zinkin, 1964) – although it is far from evident what basis Zinkin had for making his claims.

Dear Harry,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 30th January. I look forward to your further comments. What I am trying to do is to find quite short printed material which is reasonably controversial, so as to make them ask themselves what it is they, in fact, think about their environment as a preliminary to deciding what they can do about it. I think that the problem with many Indian Managers is that they have a programme of action but that it is often based on an inaccurate view of their society and particularly of village society. I think if we can get them discussing the facts of the society the questions will flow automatically. However, if you feel otherwise I would, of course, defer to your greater teaching experience.

Yours,

Maurice Zinkin

c.c. Miss Sims, Secretary to Mr. Hansen at Harvard

American and British development planners during the early Cold War saw the village as a key unit of development during the Cold War, identifying a need to develop
villages in Asian and African countries that were seen to be under threat from communist infiltration (Sackley, 2011), with prior work like that of American architect Albert Mayer being co-opted by Cold War political goals (Sackley, 2013). The development of management education involved a substantial portion of agribusiness as well, and prior to Sarabhai’s letter Harvard Business School faculty had already been involved in India on development agendas.

The husband-wife team Rolf Lynton and Harriet Ronken “Ronnie” Lynton had been in India working as part of the UNESCO-sponsored Aloka program on youth leadership and entrepreneurship/community development. Both of them were management professors in Harvard, part of the human relations school. Ronnie Lynton had worked with Paul Lawrence (who was also associated with the IIM) on a case study book on human relations (Lynton & Lawrence, 1952) was the third woman to teach in HBS and taught before women were admitted as students. Henrietta Larson, a pioneer in the field of business history and a pioneering female professor (whose contributions were often neglected due to her gender (McDonald, 2017, pp. 237–238)), expressed interest in going to India as well – and it was through these faculty that HBS further expanded its connections within India even before it committed itself to IIM Ahmedabad.

In conclusion, the April 13, 1962 memo and other correspondence provide evidence suggesting that Cold War political and ideological interests were important motivations for the HBS decision to accept Sarabhai’s offer, and, based on my understanding of Sackley (2004) much of these decisions were based on the liberal anticommunist vision.
during the Kennedy administration. The desire to extend Harvard influence and legitimacy within the business elite of the Indian subcontinent were interlinked with the American interest in keeping the legitimacy and influence of democracy and capitalism to the extent that both sets of interests appeared interchangeable and synonymous with one another within the given documents.

I follow with a two-part discussion section. Part 1 deals with the personal judgments of the Harvard faculty in India and how their opinions did not consider Indian conditions or opinions as much as they should have in the circumstances, even though their Indian colleagues and Dr. Sarabhai in particular held a high level of agency over the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad project. Part 2 discusses Harvard Business School’s own political considerations during this time period and places both the memo to George P. Baker and the School’s involvement in Ahmedabad in a further expanded context, that of Harvard’s prior involvement in combating communism even before the Cold War. I discuss how these documents could shed further understanding on the foreign policy role of universities in general and Harvard in particular, and how this may lead to a new subfield of research.

General themes prevalent in the documents

During the course of reading through the correspondence and taking notes of what was emphasized, I came across a set of five overarching themes or areas of importance to the Harvard faculty that recurred across the letters and memoranda.

The themes uncovered from these documents are not adequate to construct an overarching theory of how Harvard as an organization legitimized its role and its purpose, or
that of business education in India more specifically. However, these do shed light on how Harvard’s top faculty – Teele, Hansen and Fox in particular – saw as legitimate concerns or areas of interest for Harvard Business School.

1. **Personal connections or links to Harvard.** Personal connections are a recurrent theme in the letters to Harvard. My reading of secondary sources shows how important it is for Harvard to maintain connections with its alumni and benefactors, and to continue expanding its influence among other desirable social and economic elites. In turn, these connections have provided a source of income and continued influence to Harvard for years to come. As a result, I take special note of all personal connections that are mentioned.

   For example – “**Sarabhai is both a professional and personal friend of F. J. Roethlisberger, who met him in India, and Sarabhai also known to J. Fox and Roethlisberger during an earlier visit to M.I.T. when he evidenced much interest in HBS**”.

2. **Decisions or key action points voiced by Harvard faculty.** Decisions or key action points are those crucial moments when Harvard faculty and administrators decide what they need to do on behalf of Harvard. I took note of these because these moments led to the main event in question – the mentoring of IIM Ahmedabad by Harvard- and revealed several of Harvard’s implicit or previously known interests. This category and the next tend to overlap frequently in practice.

   For example – “**I suppose it would be a little overdramatic to say this may be our last chance to do something sizeable in India, but I am rather inclined to think that we may not**
have another chance for some years and so I would guess we would want to think this through quite carefully.”

3. Interests identified by Harvard faculty. The interests that mattered most to the decisions being taken landed up being clearly articulated – if the previous category of themes consists of the decisions being weighed, this category consists of the interests explicitly rather than implicitly revealed to be behind them. Both this category and the previous category overlap frequently in practice.

For example -“I have a special interest in view of our multinational company proposals. A “base” in India could be of great benefit for future research. It would of course be of a different nature than our Philippine “base” but it would open up similar research opportunities. I think it is worth pointing out that research directly on the multinational company must be accompanied by some research on the industrial infrastructure within which the multinational company operates.”

4. Status markers or judgments of individuals (by Harvard or others). Status markers or judgments are the small personal markers of individual rank, status, title, position, etc. that they paid heed to in terms of desirability. Harvard faculty have a tendency to judge highly-placed individuals as being valuable on the basis of their status, at times (possibly subconsciously) taking on a patronizing tone as though judging a student’s character for admission
For example – “Clearly Thacker himself is a highly intelligent person. He seems to move around just under the level of prime ministers and what not.”

5. Competitors/rivals/actions by other parties that are a cause of consideration. I accorded mentions of competitors here special recognition because these were a key part of the decisions being taken. In considering the role of competitors or other entities, HBS admins were careful never to make HBS appear needy no matter how desperately they wanted the position.

For example – “George tells me that the Indian government has requested UCLA to run the Ahmedabad Institute and the Ford Foundation has agreed. He says that his position and the position of UCLA at this point is that they have not made up their mind whether they should or should not do this. He would like to have one of his staff spend six weeks studying the problems involved before UCLA makes up its mind whether to accept the request from the Indian government.”

Discussion

Part 1: Placing Harvard within India

Unlike other postcolonial narratives that emphasize the way colonialism imposed the education systems of the colonizing culture upon the colonized, there exists documentary proof that Harvard was invited in by Vikram Sarabhai, apparently entirely at Sarabhai’s own initiative, to establish an educational institution for graduate business education. The letters
between Hansen, Fox and Roethlisberger discuss HBS’s own desire for influence in India as a replacement for UCLA. This extended even to the extent of suggesting seeking an alternative arrangement with the help of Ambassador Galbraith, which I analyze and discuss below in its own small section due to Galbraith’s extremely high diplomatic standing. Galbraith’s involvement was discussed pursuant to Sarabhai’s initial proposal and no other “Harvard men” are mentioned, suggesting that neither HBS nor any other college or school under Harvard University had any major involvement with India at the time, and neither was HBS conceiving or pursuing any Indian ventures on its own. The content of the letters evinces the supplicatory position of HBS vis-à-vis both Sarabhai and the Ford Foundation but its key members were unwilling to show it, either to Sarabhai himself or to UCLA.

Rather than a mere one-way transfer of knowledge and associated dependency as suggested by previous work on the IIM grounded in postcolonial theory (Sancheti, 1986; Srinivas, 2008), the archives suggest that the picture on the ground was more complicated. The report of the second year curriculum committee suggests that there was genuine, collegial collaboration between the faculty from both Harvard and the IIM in developing their curriculum to suit Indian conditions (Bhattacharya et al., 1964) rather than having an American curriculum transplanted. A memorandum sent by Hansen regarding a luncheon meeting on November 9, 1962 is explicit in calling the cooperation with Ahmedabad “a two-way street”, emphasizing the learning opportunities being presented (Hansen, 1962b), showing that of Hansen was plainly conscious that Harvard was not in a position to dictate terms unilaterally in Ahmedabad, and that lecturing was not desirable – in a December 26,
1962 letter to Kamla Chowdhry (Hansen, 1962a) he objects to a series of planned evening talks by stating that he often thought of India “…as being full of Americans going around giving lectures. We want our group, in a very polite way, to listen to people and not to talk to them.” Several other letters show that colleagues on both sides took note of the cultural differences involved, with the Indian professors tending to defer to Sarabhai’s authority and accepting his decisions on all matters as final, while American professors would continue to disagree and show their support by challenging Sarabhai and pointing out his errors.

Harvard was specifically invited to India to assist in the development of the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad by Vikram Sarabhai, and documents from the time period show that both visiting HBS professors and the Indian professors at the IIM were actively discussing plans to adapt coursework, grading and scholarship systems to the Indian content rather than copying the American system exactly in all its details; there is no evidence to conclusively demonstrate that the practice of meritocratic systems of judging, sorting, grading, assessing and anointing individuals would have been fundamentally different in India without American (specifically Harvard) influence.

Sarabhai himself was highly regarded; he was a man described by his American counterparts as impressively highly educated, to the point of being called a ‘Benjamin Franklin-style renaissance man’ (Copen, 1964b). However, several Harvard correspondents at Ahmedabad were unhappy with what they perceived to be an attempt by Sarabhai to build a “monument” to himself, even if the IIM with its dependence on Harvard case study pedagogy was in some sense a “monument” to Harvard Business School’s legacy in business education.
Crucially, the letters do not contain any discussion about why Sarabhai or Thacker might want Harvard’s involvement specifically rather than American involvement in general apart from their unhappiness with the Ford Foundation attempting to push through the contract with the UCLA – suggesting a lack of reflection and a level of self-assurance about HBS’s own status and worth. This idea, so deeply entrenched within Harvard, that it is a fount of legitimacy for the best business practices (Karabel, 2005; Rivera, 2016) in the world, is implicit in these letters discussing the crucial decision to connect to India. In his luncheon memorandum (Hansen, 1962b), Hansen states that “Business education in India has been widely separated from the realities of business life” (with similar sentiments shared by his colleague A.R. Towl according to Kumar (2019)) but none of the Harvard faculty appear to have attempted to make a genuine assessment of the existing state of business education within India; this is in direct contrast to their MIT colleagues at IIM Calcutta, one of whom compiled a document detailing the history and existing status of business and commerce education in India for the benefit of all IIM Calcutta faculty, Indian and American.

Prejudice aside, the behavior and reasoning of the Harvard faculty at Ahmedabad appears to be reasonable based on the correspondence available. On the other hand, voices from the Indian side that might explain behavior that their American colleagues found irrational are missing. The very content of the material, once again, privileges Harvard’s viewpoint, with seemingly little attempt having been made by Hansen, Haynes or Copen to fully understand their Indian colleagues or the nature of the system they had been brought up in before dismissing it as unworkable. The working of IIM Calcutta provides a contrast –
even in the absence of correspondence, it appears that the MIT professors were far more
willing to accommodate their Indian colleagues and work together in an arrangement that
pleased both Americans and Indians.

An attempt to study rather than dismiss the Indian system might have provided
explanations for the competitive rather than cooperative behavior displayed by the Indian
faculty, and provided possible “workarounds” for these cultural differences. Kamla
Chowdhry is quoted as asking for Harvard faculty to arrive in the capacity of equals and to
seek to learn the Indian system before giving their advice as equals rather than superiors(Hill
et al., 1973, p. 138) – a suggestion that Hill, Haynes and Baumgartel politely dismissed as
“unfeasible” while outright ignoring the implication that Kamla Chowdhry considered the
Americans ignorant of the system they were attempting to change. My study of the available
correspondence suggests that Dr. Chowdhry’s suggestion, however infeasible it may have
appeared to Professors Hill, Haynes and Baumgartel, was entirely reasonable in the
circumstances.

Visiting HBS faculty member Melvyn Copen corresponded extensively with Warren
Haynes and Harry Hansen. In addition to HBS faculty member Allan Cohen, Copen took part
in a lengthy critique of administration at the IIM, with numerous instances in which both men
raised seemingly reasonable objections to its functioning. I do not analyze the full set of
complaints and observations made by Copen and Cohen although I acknowledge that several
of them are valid in the context in which they were written. However, I also note that both
men expressed opinions about matters in which their understanding appeared to be
incomplete, and appeared to lack reflexivity about their own positions or any attempt to understand the Indian position.

Copen made his own judgments of the Indian students, regarding their levels of maturity and their knowledge about business, finding both to be lacking and expressing his opinions candidly in his letters. When it came to knowledge about business, Copen found them to be lacking in basic knowledge as well as in basic mathematical knowledge, judging that they needed remedial studies before they could be instructed in coursework: he had clearly not taken into account that the Indian students arriving would not be the “cream of the crop” as they were at Harvard Business School because this was a new institution in a country where business education in general was at a lower priority, much as it had been in the United States at the turn of the century. HBS had its own past experience seeking to legitimize business education and the memorandum to George P. Baker makes it clear that they were aware of the Indian government’s apathy toward business; in hindsight it appears that Copen was not fully informed about what he could possibly expect. This does not extend to some of the more prejudiced observations, however.

At Harvard, maturity was determined by marital status, with married students being considered ‘mature’ and unmarried students considered ‘immature’ by default, an extension that was proposed to be extended towards IIM students. In addition to the inherently sexist and judgmental nature of this assessment of maturity, it avoids actually defining and assessing maturity in a manner meaningful to the program. However, the maturity by marital status does privilege a 1950s American point of view that a man is not truly mature until
marriage, and enforcing the sanctity of marriage and male dominance during the post-war period (McLaren & Mills, 2008; Runté & Mills, 2006). It additionally further genders the students as implicitly male, with an added footnote stating that the committee had voted to allow the inclusion of women, who would previously have been excluded by default. Copen additionally considered his Indian students to have the same maturity as Harvard students two to three years their junior, although he did not further explain what he meant in this case. It is not entirely clear from the context of his letter whether it was a reflection of the Indian students’ level of knowledge or their behavior.

Some of the other social and cultural changes resulting from the late 1940s and early 1950s become evident in an exchange written in 1964. On April 22, 1964, Prof. Ralph Hidy of HBS wrote back to Harry L. Hansen (Hansen, 1964; Hidy, 1964) regarding a letter of April 17 (not in this collection) regarding three candidates for the post of the director of the IIM. In the end, none of the three individuals were selected, but I nevertheless include the letter to demonstrate the persistence of the pattern of legitimacy-building.

[April 29, 1964 letter from Harry Hansen to HBS Prof. Ralph W. Hidy]

Dear Ralph;

Thanks very much for your opinions on Santhanam, Grewal and Mehta.

Perhaps I have mentioned to you that the Ahmedabad Institute is most anxious to do some work in the field of Indian business history. Although I have not corresponded with her directly, I gather than[sic] Henrietta Larson is most interested but not until
the summer of 1965. As perhaps you know she has long had a close link with Harriet Ronkin who is in Hyderabad. I always think of her by her maiden name, although she is of course now married to Rolf Lynton. If you have any thoughts about a young person who would like to go to India to do some research in the field, please let me know. This would not interfere with Henrietta’s going; as a matter of fact, it would probably be helpful.

Sincerely yours,

HLH:bms

Hidy projects American convention onto the three candidates, as evinced by his consideration for social responsibilities and the American convention of having the wife of a highly placed individual assist him socially:

I was favorably impressed by all three men – Santhanam, Grewal, and Mehta. They are all able, alert men, sincerely desirous of making a mark in the world and of helping to give India a new place in the sun.

Of the three, however, Mr. Santhanam is outstanding, I think. He has achieved a high position in a large corporation, thereby demonstrating capacity for administration. He has a more outgoing personality than either Grewal or Mehta and would, I should think, handle social responsibilities as effectively as decision making. Moreover, he has a wife that would be of major help to him in the social area.
Women had been forced into subordinate positions both socially and organizationally beginning at the end of the Second World War, a shift that is reflected within organization and management theory through the use of increasingly gendered discourse that subjugated women with conservative work-family discourses (Runté & Mills, 2006) and in creating the social construct of the ideal male manager (McLaren & Mills, 2008) with women relegated to supportive roles. These beliefs are reflected in the above letter. In addition, the letter demonstrates the same pattern of judgment and projecting American expectations onto the Indians as the previous exchanges in 1961 did, even if the subjects of discussion are somewhat different.

Additionally, the relationship between the Harvard faculty and the Indian faculty was hampered by cultural and status differences, which Hill, Haynes and Baumgartel put down to the Ford Foundation practice of treating HBS faculty as “consultants” at IIM Ahmedabad (Hill et al., 1973). One of the stated concerns of Harvard professors in India at the time was the need for greater academic freedom, which appeared repeatedly in correspondence, and which was subject to a lengthy set of memoranda and discussions. Although one of the officially stated reasons for bringing academic freedom up to Harvard standards was stated to be breaking free of official institutional constraints, such as that at the University of Bombay (Arthur, 1964), other correspondence suggests that it was emphasized in part due to cultural differences regarding authority between Indian and American faculty. For instance, when the Indian faculty would change their opinion to match Sarabhai’s on a
given issue, Harvard faculty (Prof. Copen in particular) were willing to continue to disagree openly.

A letter by Mel Copen regarding Sarabhai’s behavior suggests that Sarabhai intended to build a “monument” to himself rather than dealing with actual Indian demands for trained managers, but there is not enough information available at Harvard to build a completely consistent and verifiable model of Sarabhai’s motivations. Without having read any of Sarabhai’s own writings, it is not possible to reconstruct his intentions. If any faculty member, Indian or American, attempted to critically analyze and contrast HBS’s activities at Ahmedabad with Sarabhai’s, the results are absent from the archives.

Even though the book on the founding of the Indian Institutes of Management by Hill, Haynes and Baumgartel was titled “Institution Building in India”, one of the key elements appears to have been institutional change in favor of Harvard, as evinced by HBS’s interests in continuing to build relationships with Indian universities and with Indians in positions of corporate and political power. One such example is a letter dated March 9, 1964 from Professor Henry B. Arthur to Dean George Lombard, discussing a lunch meeting with G.D. Parikh, the Rector of the University of Bombay on March 6 of the same year (Arthur, 1964). The discussion involved setting up a possible Graduate School of Business Administration at Bombay and possible cooperation and research between the planned new institute and Harvard Business School, including areas of such interest as case studies, joint research activities, faculty exchange between Ahmedabad and Bombay and planned visits from HBS faculty. Despite the seeming lack of progress on the basis of the letter’s contents,
it contains matters pertaining to Harvard’s interest, in facilitating and furthering available academic networks and in seeking an expanded market for management graduates who have been trained via the IIMs.

The use of case studies appears to be an important part of the exchange, since many exchanges between Harvard faculty members and IIM Ahmedabad involved the establishment of a Case Clearing House at IIM Ahmedabad in order to clear cases (Copen, 1964a), permissions to use HBS cases, and attempts by HBS to further the use of the case method as a teaching tool. Case methodology has served as a hallmark of business education in HBS ever since its inception in the 1910s, and a long series of letters and memoranda from Professors Mel Copen, Arch Dooley and IIM librarian S.K. Seth regarding the acquisition of cases from 1964 to 1966 serve as examples of how important the acquisition of existing HBS cases and the creation of a case study system based on the one existing at HBS was to their interests in the IIM.

Arthur’s Letter to Lombard also makes mention of Hyderabad, a reference to the Administrative Staff College (where HBS faculty member A.R. Towl was visiting and wrote his April 5 letter regarding Tulsidas Kilachand). The Administrative Staff College (ASC) was explicitly based off of the college at Henley where the British Civil Service trained civil servants and had been established in 1953 at the behest of the Government of India to train members of the Indian Civil Service in Management and Public Administration (Hill et al., 1973). Although Lombard mentions Hyderabad alongside Ahmedabad and Calcutta when speaking about saturating the market with the three management programs, the management
program at Hyderabad was restricted to the civil service and has never been open to the
general public – in retrospect, the ASC is little known among the Indian public at present and
not associated with the IIMs, although the IIMs are very widely known. Kumar (2019)
identifies the continued use of “teaching syndicates” by the ASCI at Hyderabad as an
example of the Ford Foundation failing to impose a Harvard-style case study system upon the
ASC, but my reading of the letters in the Special Collections and McDonald (2017) suggests
that it was simply the result of Towl attempting to impose his belief in the innate superiority
of Harvard’s case study method.

Given previous statements about Harvard’s interest in multinational corporations and
an “Indian base” (Hansen, 1961), it is interesting to see expressions of American corporate
interest in India. Harry L. Hansen candidly responded to a letter by Mercer Brugler,
Chairman of the Board, Pfaunder Permutit Inc. in Rochester N.Y. on February 5, 1964.
Brugler inquired about the potential graduates from the business management institute being
set up in Ahmedabad, India due to their interest in setting up a plant for the manufacture of
pharmaceutical equipment, and Hansen responded by sending Brugler a brochure and
catalogue for the Indian Institute of Management and admitting of the intention to ‘have
influence’ in India.

There is one other program being started by the Institute this June, but we do not
currently have a copy of the brochure announcing it. It is designed for young men
who because of family affiliations find themselves in positions of major
responsibility. As you know, the family concern in India is a very common thing,
we hope that we can influence and train some of these young men because they should be in positions to influence the future. I might add that we are being careful not to develop an image which indicates that we are only interested in educating the privileged classes. In this connection we are planning a series of night programs for men who will find it difficult to leave their jobs. And I might add that in the postgraduate program, we plan to offer sufficient fellowships so that this program will be filled with able people regardless of their financial resources.

I hope you find this material interesting. In March of 1966 we should have some bright and well trained Indians available for you and other business managers in India.

Among other sources, Hansen sought aid from the United States Agency for International Development(A.I.D.) in March 1964, requesting financial support using United States owned rupees. This request was turned down due to restrictions on U.S. owned rupee funds under the P.L. 480 legislation, and the reply letter took note of several similar project proposals that were also turned down for funding due to the same restrictions. The issue of rupee funds came up again in a letter by HBS student R. Bruce Cuthbertson on Dec 20, 1963, who spoke highly of his experiences in India and sought to know whether a reciprocal arrangement could be made to bring Indian students to the United States. Reciprocal cultural exchange arrangements of the sort suggested by Cuthbertson were in fact used to build cultural linkages between America and international students.
Part 2: John Kenneth Galbraith’s silence, and Harvard Business School's role in Cold War foreign policy

The narrative that I have assembled from within the Harvard Business School archive goes against other perceptions of the relative positions of HBS and international business schools during the time period of the 1950s and 1960s, and casts additional light upon the role of business education during the Cold War. This period was, and continues to remain, relatively underexplored within the field of business education. Only a few studies have been made exploring links between business schools and political actors.

While searching through the archives at HBS, I came across an unusual finding: One of the most influential individuals involved in this period of American interest in India’s development, John Kenneth Galbraith, is mentioned once with respect to the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad, and then disappears from the available data with surprising completeness. Galbraith, already an extremely highly regarded economist, was the United States Ambassador to India at the time in addition to being a faculty member on extended leave from Harvard.

Galbraith is mentioned in John B. Fox’s memorandum to Stanley Teele dated July 18, 1961, which discusses Harry Hansen’s memorandum of June 30, a document that I did not find in the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad Records. The manner in which the memorandum’s ideas are only indirectly referred to suggests that it was a confidential document and may have been restricted or removed from circulation in some manner; furthermore, if it had simply been misplaced it would have been prohibitively difficult to
search for. The last paragraph of the memorandum is given as the context in which Galbraith is discussed, but what was discussed or suggested in the memorandum remains unknown since none of the ideas in it are given a direct mention. Galbraith is mentioned a second time in the final paragraph of the memorandum (Fox, 1961d).

[…] If U.C.L.A. is going to go ahead alone then I think Harry’s last paragraph should be discussed and we should decide whether or not we want to start correspondence with Galbraith.[…]

[…] I have known Ken Galbraith for quite a number of years. I would not claim that I know him well, but sometimes I wonder if anybody knows him well, and I would be only too glad to write him a sort of exploratory letter enlarging a bit on Harry’s suggestions and telling him that this is one alternative possibility that we would be willing to entertain, if you think such a letter would be advisable. […]

The furtive references to Harry Hansen’s suggestions and seeming distrust towards Galbraith evident in the statements “I would not claim that I know him well, but sometimes I wonder if anybody knows him well…” and “…I would [write him a letter]…if you think such a letter would be advisable.” give the impression that Galbraith was not someone whom Fox was comfortable making such suggestions to. In any event, the UCLA did not go ahead at Ahmedabad and HBS took its place, removing the context in which Fox intended to speak to Galbraith.
However, I found the entire exchange, coupled with the lack of any further mentions of Galbraith in any of the correspondence, sufficiently intriguing to search for references to the Indian Institutes of Management in Galbraith’s papers. It seemed logical that Fox, Hansen or someone else from Harvard would have spoken to Galbraith at some point of time, given that Galbraith, no matter whether Fox knew him well enough, was the United States Ambassador to India and a member of the Harvard faculty, and therefore someone who should have come to know about HBS involvement in India one way or the other. Galbraith’s papers are stored at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library and Museum in Boston. I began examining correspondence that took place in July 1961 and expanded the search. I spent six to seven hours searching all relevant declassified papers and correspondence over two days, but failed to find any mention of Harvard Business School or either Indian Institute of Management.

I also consulted Galbraith’s Ambassador’s Journal, the book he had written concerning his times in India and including his personal correspondence and observations (Galbraith, 1969). It was evident both from the papers and from his Journal that he was in India at the time (July 1961) that Fox raised the suggestion of talking to him and for a substantial period of time afterwards, during the planning phase of both IIMs. No mention is made of a letter, telegram, phone call, or any other correspondence with Fox or anyone else from Harvard Business School. Even more interestingly, when Galbraith visits the Sarabhai business family in Ahmedabad on March 25, 1962 (Galbraith, 1969, pp. 300–303) no mention at all is made of Vikram Sarabhai or of his involvement with Harvard Business
School in creating IIM Ahmedabad. Galbraith makes comments on a variety of topics such as about Indian development, the Ford Foundation, educational institutes including the Indian Institutes of Technology, mentions the All-India Management Association, and includes hundreds of observations about Indian culture, society, institutions, people and climate in addition to his personal life and political associations. Given the breadth of Galbraith’s observations, the absolute omission of the Indian Institutes of Management or Harvard Business School in any manner (whether approached by them or not) seems very difficult to explain.

Galbraith’s own brief mention - and following non-involvement - from the material surrounding the IIMs does not appear to make sense, on the basis of his individual temperament and the uniquely elevated position he held with respect at the time. Here is an instance where a silence in archival material leaves no clear interpretation: is it deliberate, accidental, or structural? Had Ambassador Galbraith not known about Harvard Business School’s involvement with Vikram Sarabhai at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad at all? Did he know and choose to ignore it as not worth being mention, improbably as it may seem? Or did he know and deliberately stay silent about it in the same manner that Fox chose not to explicitly mention the contents of Hansen’s suggestions in the June 30 memo? The data does not provide an unambiguous answer. And if Fox, Hansen or Teele ever did write to Galbraith regarding the IIM, what transpired between them remains undisclosed. Frustratingly, this one silence does obscure the link between the spread of early business education and the political ties between the business school and economic
development, whether in terms of New Deal liberalism or in early neoliberal unregulated free-market growth.

Harvard University has long had a standing interest in maintaining the existing social system within the upper and upper-middle classes of the United States, and extending it further. Harvard historically derived much of its student body from upper-class boarding schools such as Groton, and sought to continue the notions of gentlemanliness, social class, “manliness” and “character” that those schools socialized their students into (Karabel, 2005, p. 38). In addition, Harvard’s most influential president, Charles William Eliot, believed in Jefferson’s notion of a “natural aristocracy” and believed that superior education was only owed to those who had the capacity to prove that they had the necessary persistence and endurance. Accordingly, children in a democratic society were to be taught that inequalities of condition were a necessary result of freedom (Karabel, 2005, p. 41), a message that continued to be carried on by Eliot’s successors, Abbot Lawrence Lowell and James Conant Bryant.

Much of the evolution of management and ideas occurred during this period, and the Harvard Business School was much a part of it. Even during the 1930s, one of the reasons for the adoption of the Human Relations School at HBS under Elton Mayo and Wallace Donham was major American corporations’ fear of communism and the growing acceptance of communist ideas during the Great Depression (O’Connor, 1999b, 1999a). Both Donham, the Dean of HBS from 1919-1942 and Mayo positioned themselves and their ideas as a means of “saving Western civilization” (Donham, 1936), above and beyond dealing with social and
industrial conflicts. Donham produced a large number of articles for the Harvard Business Review (HBR) arguing for the importance and social benefit of free business. During the Second World War, the Harvard Business Review produced a number of journal articles arguing for the role of business in standing by for war and promoting corporate responsibility. With the end of the war and the beginning of the Cold War, the themes surrounding the HBR turned to the need to combat communism both at home and abroad; these included writings by foreign students at HBS on the need for America and American business to engage with their nation (Spector, 2006, 2008a). Eliot’s message that inequalities of condition were a necessary result of freedom was a message that was to be repeated during the Cold War, to counter the image of the classless society so prominent in Communist propaganda.

Business schools had proliferated during the years immediately following the Second World War (Khurana, 2007) and both the Ford and Carnegie foundations were involved in generating recommendations at the time (McLaren, 2019). While this lent Harvard Business School a new respectability and both enrollments and graduate placements improved dramatically (Khurana, 2007), the American domestic political situation eroded. Hysteria caused by McCarthyism in the early 1950s led to a general purge of communists and anyone suspected of communist sympathies from academia (McCumber, 1996), a fate that not even the foundations could avoid, with the House Un-American Activities Committee investigating them for suspected communist sympathies. Tadajewski (2009) shows how the McCarthyism of the early Cold War led to the growth of behavioral science as an ostensibly
ideologically-neutral term because the Ford Foundation’s own emphasis on social science was deemed to be “Un-American” and “Communist”, with then-President of the Ford Foundation, Paul Hoffman, attracting McCarthy’s unwanted attention and being replaced by Rowan Gaither as a result (Sackley, 2004, pp. 67–69), a move that changed the Foundation’s emphasis from development projects in the field to the making of development knowledge by academic experts instead (Sackley, 2004, Chapter 4) which would later include the “interest” in the two All-India Institutes of Management that Sarabhai mentioned in his April 1, 1961 letter.

Bert Spector has examined the role of the Cold War and the resultant fear of communism in management education and the growth of business, ranging from new attitudes towards defining and executing corporate social responsibility efforts within an explicitly anti-communist ideological framework (Spector, 2008a), actively blacklisting suspected communists rather than merely doing so as a pragmatic reaction to public hysteria (Spector, 2008b) and attempting to allay public suspicion of big business through depictions in film and television, creating an image of corporations and business executives as both benevolent and legitimately suited to hold an exalted position (Spector, 2008c). Many of the ideals expressed within film and television, and the cultural shift in favor of big business had been prefigured by the contributors to the Harvard Business Review.

Correspondence between Harvard and IIM faculty includes numerous indirect references to the need for social change and for social awareness. There are classes on business and society, business and government, the legal aspects of business, ‘Organization
and Social Change’ and so on that would seem unnecessary and antiquated at present but demonstrate a clear need to demonstrate the utility of business while conforming to the Cold War portrayal of business as fundamentally benevolent. The business school had to be advertised due to the general poor attitude towards business within India, which was seen as a hindrance, although a general disdain for business education had existed amongst the general public and even businessmen in the United States during the period that the Harvard Business School was established (Khurana, 2007), with the Harvard faculty showing at this stage a rather poignant lack of knowledge of history among the business educators themselves.

New scholarship by Cooke & Kumar (forthcoming) examines the role of American philanthropic associations in shaping management education not just in the United States but elsewhere in the world, as they sought to legitimize the American system and push back against communism, which they saw as an existential threat. Cooke and Kumar see the development of philanthrocapitalism based on the foundations as extending American neo-colonial power and projecting a uniquely American notion of modernization and Westernization. Their work extends upon prior knowledge of the role of philanthropic foundations in shaping management education within the United States and extending abroad in the form of the growing Americanization of business education (Berman, 1983; Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015; Khurana, 2007; Khurana et al., 2011). During this period, the development of business education did not necessarily conform to the interests of the foundations in their entirety, with Brazil’s prominent business school EAESP using Ford Foundation money
while subverting its interests and frequently ignoring Foundation consultant Thomas Carroll in favor of their own needs (Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015). If Brazilian actors had some agency in limiting the “dominating” power of the Ford Foundation, the Indian actors in this case had far more power, as did Harvard Business School.

Philanthropic organizations have advanced management theories meant to establish social order domestically within the United States, a role that has also been studied increasingly over the past two decades (Guilhot, 2007; O’Connor, 1999b, 1999a; Parmar, 2011), however, Cooke and Kumar extend this by studying the role of management to fight communism through the establishment of American-style business schools abroad. Harvard and the establishment of the IIMs came about under the same umbrella, and that Harvard itself took on the role of a transnational actor with its own agenda and its own ability to project American soft power quasi-independent of the Ford Foundation or any official arm of the United States government. Kenneth Andrews was the key faculty member in developing strategies for international outreach at the HBS and referred to as “the key figure at Harvard through the 1950s and the 1960s.” (McDonald, 2017) and although he was involved with IIM Ahmedabad he did not figure prominently in the correspondence.

Additionally, Cooke and Kumar focus on the role of the foundations as projectors of “soft power” of cultural influence, which makes weaker nation-states (in this case) align their national interests with those of dominant powers want without the need for coercion or use of force (Nye, 2004). The soft power of a state relies on three resources, according to Nye –
having a culture that is attractive to others, its political values, and foreign policy values, and exists with rather than over another actor.

American universities project soft power by influencing important foreign individuals with American ideals and connections and have played an increasingly active and vital role of shaping and sustaining positive relationships with other countries, aided by the relative attractiveness of American ideals and institutions (Altbach & Peterson, 2008). Altbach and Peterson note that America’s relative diversity, lack of central planning and availability of sponsorship have helped lead to success in international education programs. They also equate the concept of public diplomacy, which consists of engaging, informing and influencing citizens of other countries, with Nye’s concept of soft power.

American universities already serve as transnational actors with transnational power, although research examining the Cold War interaction of the US government, American philanthropic organizations such as the foundations, American and foreign universities and academia that explores the public-private relationship of soft power is still rare, according to Bertelsen (2014a). Bertelsen separates university soft power from national soft power, with university soft power being based on behavior rather than resources and dependent on the acceptance of the university and its mission (Bertelsen, 2012). Universities have continued to be accepted and project acceptance of American ideals and institutions even in countries where American policy is deeply resented and criticized; they have proven capable of influencing domestic and foreign policy in the Middle East and China (Bertelsen, 2014a, 2014b), serving to project American soft power interests in Beirut and Cairo, as well as in
reverse by projecting the soft power of Middle Eastern interests in America (Bertelsen, 2012).

Altbach and Pederson provide additional examples, such as the establishment of universities based on the British system in colonial India, the placement of talented students in the British Empire within British universities and, in the 20th and 21st centuries, the immigration of highly skilled professors and students into American academia as ways by which networks of public diplomacy may form. The United States additionally used systems of academic exchange and studying abroad such as the Fulbright Program to develop mutual understanding and goodwill with opinion leaders in other countries. Based on my reading of the HBS correspondence and the emphasis placed on HBS alumni, Harvard sought to build something similar, to build mutual goodwill with alumni in other countries while simultaneously providing a solution for American needs for goodwill during the Cold War.

**Conclusion**

The history of the role of universities and international business education in shaping our present world politically, socially, culturally and economically has not been given as much attention as it deserves, within academia or broader public discourse, but a greater study of these should help us understand how the world as we live in was deliberately constructed.

The documents I have uncovered show that genesis of IIM Ahmedabad, currently one of the highest rated business schools in India, was very different from what was previously imagined. Instead of being an entirely apolitical entity, created due to the diffusion of American business management being ‘in the ether’, its creation was in part a result of Cold
War politics and social discourse surrounding both the importance of India as the world’s largest democracy and the need for better business management. United States ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith may have been involved in an as-yet undetermined manner. And in place of a neocolonial project imposed by the Ford Foundation on India, I found a web of connections and personal relationships that lay behind Vikram Sarabhai inviting Harvard Business School for assistance and which was essential for HBS to move forward in Ahmedabad. This paper underscores the poorly explored connection between the growth of business education and foreign policy, as well as the role of universities in changing both the politics and society of the world around us.

Harvard Business School sought to legitimize its own position and standing through the development of networks with individuals of high social, political and economic position internationally. Visiting Harvard faculty additionally imposed social and moral judgments derived from a Harvard-centric point of view upon Indian colleagues and the IIM. In addition, Harvard derived legitimacy internally among its members through the suggestion that they had a valuable role to play in advancing American foreign policy interests in the Cold War, and that Harvard’s own interests were legitimately interlinked with those of the United States to the point of both implicitly being synonymous with one another.

The case of IIM Ahmedabad may be only one instance of the broader trend of Americanization in business education, but it has revealed that it was not as simple as it is often presented: the Ford Foundation funded the development of the Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad and Calcutta but in the case of Ahmedabad, HBS inserted itself
into the role originally intended for the UCLA against the Ford Foundation’s initial wishes, and unlike the case of the Ford Foundation and EAESP in Brazil, both the Indian actors and HBS succeeded in undertaking power brokering of their own independently of the Ford Foundation, relegating the Foundation’s role to that of a convenient source of funding and legitimacy (only for external sources, the internal correspondence does not evoke the Foundation in a legitimizing manner). HBS’s own interests were interconnected with and justified using US foreign policy interests with the Ford Foundation remaining without any mention in the key April 13, 1962 memo. HBS itself was not in a position to intervene and had no plans to do so until it was directly invited by Vikram Sarabhai. Therefore, the very nature of “American neo-colonial power” as is often suggested needs to be reexamined as the result of the interaction of a number of smaller actors, some even acting on a personal level.

Even with the complete silence surrounding Galbraith on both sides, the materials in the Special Collections at Harvard Business School leave open room to examine a relatively unexamined aspect to the founding of the IIMs: their use as sites of American “soft power” during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union during the time period of their founding, with the human and organizational actors involved in the founding of the IIMs also seeking to promote the legitimacy of democracy and free-market capitalism in the face of fears of communist expansion. The memorandum of April 13, 1962 connected directly to the American ideas of India’s importance as the world’s largest free country. However, in this case the idea of promoting American national interests was assumed by Harvard Business School, not by the United States government or its agencies. Harvard
effectively took the role of an independent foreign policy actor interpreting and executing aspects of American foreign policy, which opens up deeper implications for our understanding of universities in international relations.
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CHAPTER 4

ARCHIVES AS SITES OF SELF-LEGITIMIZATION

Introduction

The impulse to preserve and archive records is old, and human beings have long sought to preserve some sort of memory of who they were, what they were, and how they stood among their social counterparts. Some of these acts of archival preservation and record-keeping related to the cognition of status and identity, as means of bearing witness to one’s existence, one’s rank and one’s individual and cultural identity as a form of legitimization of the self (McKemmish, 1996), which may be in a practical as well as a ritual, ceremonial or symbolic manner (Cunningham, 2017; O’Toole, 1993). Bearing witness to—and thereby legitimizing—one’s status or position at a given point of time appears to be deeply intertwined with a common human tendency to preserve and record. In addition to their roles in preserving memory and records of individual status, archives also appear to project their legitimacy through physical design and ritual. Archives may be state-controlled and serve as apparatuses of state power and authority (Derrida, 1996) or, when controlled by the community, serve as spaces for community memory and identity, where people’s experiences can be put into meaning and preserved (Ketelaar, 2008), sites of where the
cultural *patrimony* of families and cities, and by further extension, nations, may be passed down to future generations.

Organizational memory is a field under increasing study (Anteby & Molnar, 2012; Rowlinson, Casey, Hansen, & Mills, 2014) at present, with a turn towards ethnographic archival research in order to understanding narratives and memory within organizations. Archives serve as both monuments of historical importance and *muniments* or tools of power within organizations (Ketelaar, 2007). They and the records contained within can define what people and organizations define who they are, or have been and want to be (Ketelaar, 2012, p. 24) – therefore, they are, by extension, legitimizers of identity and status.

Although studies of such legitimacy have been predominantly carried out for state archives, there have been less pronounced in case of non-state organizations. In addition, there has been relatively little research on the affects that an archive may have on researchers. As James M. O’Toole notes – “To be sure, knowing the source of records disposes us to defer to them: for archivists, this is what provenance is about” (O’Toole, 2002, p. 53). This leads me to consider the idea that perceived provenance might be affected by the physical location at which records are accessed and the processes or rituals surrounding their access; records at an impressive-looking location and gathered through sophisticated rituals might be seen as more relevant than records at other locations, and the institution holding those records may be accordingly perceived in higher regard. Although it would be very hard to understand how a user of the records external to the institution would view the archive in
terms of its physical space, it is much easier to understand how an institution would attempt to legitimize its own records by creating a space that is impressive to its own members.

In this paper, I review the historical record of archives being used to legitimize the interests of those who control them, and note the role of the archives as a space in doing so. I then proceed to examine the archives at the Baker Library at Harvard Business School and note how the physical space, material arrangement and the rituals surrounding the archive affect the manner in which they are portrayed to themselves as part of a legitimate tradition, with a short section including the archives at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for the sake of comparison. Rather than suggesting that HBS and MIT attempt to legitimize themselves through their archives, I explore the possibility that the physical and material arrangement and the processes followed in the spaces of both archives project different impressions of legitimacy and organizational identity.

Archives have always been associated with bounded spaces and with authority. Derrida (1996, pp. 1–2) notes that the word “archive” originates from the Greek *arkheion*, the residence of a town magistrate or leader (*archon* or *arkhon*) where records belonging to citizens were stored. It was by extension a passage from private through public as the previously private information of a record went through process of domiciliation to become institutionalized and available to the public. The word *archive* contains within it both the notions of coordinating two principles in one – both where things commence and where men command, where authority and social order are exercised. An archive is a place of consignation as well, one that is aimed towards the future (Derrida, 1996, pp. 11–18), and as a
place that is hypomnemic – supportive of, or consigning information to memory. The one who controls the archives, as Derrida notes, is the one who holds power (Derrida, 1996, p. 4); the archive serves as the physical and material location of state power and authority within a society, where official control is legitimized, and legitimate subjects of state control may be defined by virtue of the archive’s connection to the magistrate, the official holding state power. They serve as muniments, instruments of power (Ketelaar, 2007). Chronologically, archives that served to keep records of individual status and transactions have been in existence since ancient times, and have evolved over the centuries.

Within the next section, I review research on archives that show how their role as sites that project the legitimacy of their creators has evolved over kairotic time (Czarniawska, 2004) meaning appropriate time periods (as opposed to chronological or exact time), to show how the archive and its uses have evolved over time but how the core usage of the archive for legitimating the interests of its creators remains relatively unchanged. Archives have material and physical as well as textual dimensions when using the term in its positivist sense – in the sense of a place of consignment of information to memory (Barros, 2016; Cunningham, 2017; Derrida, 1996; Manoff, 2004; Mills & Helms Mills, 2011). I examine the existing literature on archives and show how the archives themselves have been used as a tool for legitimizing the interests of those who create, maintain and regulate them in addition to being seen as legitimate simply by existing.

I then engage in a brief archival ethnography of the archives at HBS and MIT to study how archives can influence a researcher’s perception of their legitimacy, a different
dimension of the archives than has otherwise been explored. I then conclude by discussing how this might connect with changing perceptions of the role of an archive that began in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and continue into the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, especially in the role of archives as dispensers of justice. Prior research on archives implicitly acknowledges the connection of archives with legitimacy in governance, in the ability of archives to anoint and legitimize relationships and individual positions and entitlements. However, there has been no prior study on how legitimacy is enacted using the archives, or what actions, ideas or processes within the physical space of the archive lead to it being a site for the enactment of legitimacy, where status relations between individuals are both set and enacted.

\textbf{Literature review: What is an archive?}

The term “archive”, like “legitimacy”, has historically been used in a variety of ways. There is no single, absolute, set definition (Bradley, 1999; Derrida, 1996; Mills & Helms Mills, 2011; Steedman, 1998), and most research does not define the term explicitly (Decker, 2013, p. 157) although Barros (2016) Mills and Helms Mills (2011) tend to divide ideas of the archive into positivist (archive) and Foucauldian (archive) definitions. Analysis of an archive differs depending on whether researchers understand it in the Foucauldian sense or choose the positivist understanding of it as a physical repository. This is reflected by the broad variety and scope of archive-related terminology used by scholars when they develop theories on the nature of disciplines and what constitute legitimate objects of study. Boundaries and disputes over disciplines are resolved by defining what may or may not be placed in an archive or the archive (Manoff, 2004). An archive can be seen as a tool of
control for what is known and what can be known – the function of the archive in limiting the work of memory to controlled recall from an archive being a technique of oligarchic power (Caygill, 1999). Archival power at its strongest is the power to define what is and what is not a serious object of research, and therefore, of mention (Trouillot, 1995, p. 99).

Positivist definitions of the archive are relatively common, and researchers studying a particular phenomenon, institution, group or person may refer to a set of collected materials “housed” in a distinct location for the purposes of preserving the “history” of an organization, person or place as an “archive”, to some extent or the other conflating it with libraries, museums and even the extant historical record (Manoff, 2004). The extent of the term and its usage are evident from its history and the research surrounding it. Within the field of organizational studies, the term ‘archive’ is frequently used in its positivist sense and archival materials are often used without any reference to the role and the functioning of the archive as a concept, or without understanding its role in creating knowledge (Barros, 2016), which limits our understanding of what can be learnt from it.

This leads to the definition given by Michel Foucault, who in turn refers to an archive not as a place but as a set of rules that determine what can be known and stated within a given society (Barros, 2016; McHoul & Grace, 1997, p. 31; Mills & Helms Mills, 2011). To study the Foucauldian *archive* or the set of embedded rules by which it is possible to know something pertaining to a particular society or organization requires a deeper study of the materials present within the physical archive. As pointed out by Foucault, historical depictions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge – and that history now
organizes the document, divides it up, distributes it, orders it, describes relations, distinguishes between what is relevant and not (Foucault, 1972, pp. 5–8). An archive, in the Foucauldian sense, becomes a system of rules and ordering knowledge so that it does not accumulate in an amorphous mass (Foucault, 1972, pp. 145–146), making the physical archive a manifestation and an extension of the Foucauldian archive.

While the physical archive and the Foucauldian archive are interlinked and the latter can be revealed by exploring the documents collected and contained within the physical archive, it also requires a far deeper and more thorough analysis of the organization itself to reveal those rules and conditions. Mills and Helms Mills (2011) revealed how the archive of gendered imagery and the informal and formal exclusion of women from key positions within British Airways stabilized or changed over time through a deeper study of the airline’s corporate archive and the documents contained therein, establishing several junctures or organizational phases where BA’s treatment of gender had changed, and how those gender constructions were created and consigned to the record. Here was a record of the constructions of the very notions of men and women, in addition to what was physically recorded.

The positivist archive can also reveal the set of conditions by which something is enacted and brought into existence. Decker (2013, 2014) and Stoler (2002) began using the physical archives of post-colonial countries to conduct their archival ethnographies, which, influenced by postcolonial theory, are in turn are focused on the existence or absence of evidence in an archive (Trouillot, 1995, pp. 48–49). Even when seeking to understand
archiving as a process, archives serve as condensed sites of epistemological and political anxiety that reveal more about their creators’ commonly held assumptions and intentions (Stoler, 2009, p. 20). I do not need to uncover the full set of rules on what can be said within HBS as an organization, or among the HBS faculty at IIM Ahmedabad in order to understand how the individuals involved in the foundation of IIM Ahmedabad helped enact the legitimacy of HBS’s position into existence. Neither do I need to know these rules to see political and epistemological anxieties – privately expressed doubts or unease about one’s political position or knowledge, contrary to the narrative expressed by the same individuals in public that lie surrounding legitimacy around the event of the creation of IIM Ahmedabad.

Therefore, I use the positivist definition implicitly used by most of the scholars whose work I review, that an archive is a set of collected materials “housed” in a distinct location for the purposes of preserving the “history” of an organization, person or place, to some extent or the other being conflated with libraries, museums and even the extant historical record (Manoff, 2004). Control over what can be said in an archive is a political action, and it involves the deliberate enrolling and de-enrolling of the interests of different actors into the interests of those who wish to have control over what can be said, much as it is within any given society or organization. Archives have always been about power, the power of the present to control what is known of the past (Schwartz & Cook, 2002). No matter whether using the positivist or the Foucauldian definition, there is no political power without control over archives (Derrida, 1996, p. 4) and there is no lasting power in any given society or organization without the legitimizing role of the archive (Ketelaar, 2002). If the archive and
archive are both connected with political power and legitimacy, how do they truly function? How may the interests of actors that led to one organization holding power over another be brought back to light by archives?

To study the rules surrounding the ordering of knowledge in Harvard Business School and the Indian Institute of Management would require a far more detailed study of both organizations, one that is beyond the scope of my current work, and besides would not be necessary if I seek to understand how the notion of legitimacy is constructed within the archive during a particular point in time. My work deals with an event, in line with Czarniawska’s emphasis on researching events within the study of organizations and organizing (Czarniawska, 2004, 2013). Rather than the Foucauldian archive, I seek to reveal how legitimacy is enacted, stated and also brought into being during a particular event, the creation of IIM Ahmedabad. There were many actors and actants (non-human, even abstract) involved in both sides. If legitimacy has been associated with an archive for a long time, it may be considered an actant. On the basis of my literature review, I decided to treat the archives as an actor as defined in the Actor-Network Theory and After literature, a decision that I explain after my literature review in light of how the archives as an actor have developed.

Archives have agency within organizations and associations in the sense of making something exist (based on the observations of Law & Mol (2008)). Archives developed for companies as a result of the growth of modern means of communication and managerial practices involving written communication serve as both a record of the past and as data for
analysis, thus serving as “memory” for an organization and an extension of “rational”
managerial control (Yates, 1993). Cognizant of this, Barros (2016) explicitly notes the need
for addressing the nature of documents and the impact that the archivist and institution have
on their production and storage, in addition to researching the organizations that archive
themselves by reflecting on how organizations in that archive may have contributed in
defining certain organizational structures and practices. This is something that I will have to
take into account when studying the document in the HBS archive.

Rather than conducting a full ethnography of the archive and examining what the
archive and its architecture say about the culture of the organization it belongs to, I examine
how the archive and its architecture and processes may help project the legitimacy of the
organization if not its full culture. I choose to examine my selected archive – the Special
Collections at the Baker Library at Harvard Business School – from the perspective of how
the archive might appear to project the legitimacy of its parent organization. In doing so, I
attempt to add to the material and visual turn in organization studies (Boxenbaum et al.,
2018).

Method and Findings

I base my study upon my visits to the Baker Library at Harvard Business School and
the Hayden Library at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. My data were gathered in
terms of observations and notes that I had taken down while visiting both locations, as well
as in my reflections upon my experiences. I took these reflections down and ordered them in
terms of my physical arrival into the spaces of the archive, from the outside to the inside.
As a result, I enter the archive in stages and describe these stages in the order in which I would be exposed to them on arrival at Harvard Business School –

1. The physical space of the archives themselves, the architecture, the décor and the general atmosphere even before entering the room.

2. Rituals of engagement involved with accessing the archive, such as putting aside my belongings, signing in, collecting any stationery provided, etc.

3. The arrangement of the data, the ordering and sorting involved in storing data in material form in the archive.

4. The data in the archive itself, and how its serves as an archive in the second sense of the term – in restricting what can and cannot be said.

As the evaluator in the perception view of legitimacy, I trace my own path through the archive and follow where legitimacy appears to be projected.

**Context: The physical space of the archive at HBS**

*The bigger the material mass, the more it entraps us: mass graves and pyramids bring history closer while they make us feel small...all the things bigger than we that we infuse with the reality of past lives, seem to speak of an immensity of which we know little except that we are part of it* (Trouillot, 1995, p. 29)

The material manifestations of the past influence our perception and acceptance of it. Immense material artifacts of the past(from pyramids to Nazi concentration camps) make us
perceive history as being “closer” to us and more “immense” and therefore more significant (Trouillot, 1995, p. 29). Since I focus on the material and visual aspects of the archives as well as the documents within, my work connects to the growing turn towards material and visual data in Organization Studies (Boxenbaum et al., 2018; Puyou & Quattrone, 2018; Stigliani & Ravasi, 2018). The purpose and function of archives are determined by their location – be they centralized and prominent to allow greater public access, or remote and inaccessible to restrict it (Cunningham, 2017), as well as in the processes and rituals involving gatekeeping and access to those documents (Müller, 2013).

Physical space is important in how the archive and its contents are perceived – for instance, for communities, the place of the archive serves as a co-ingredient of collective memory, changing the way people interact with records (Battley, 2019). Organizations use physical spaces and architecture as a part of creating their memory (Decker, 2014), often in part of a greater process of inventing a past and creating traditions through temporal narratives (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983). Therefore, the perceived legitimacy of archival spaces and of organizations themselves, plus the manner in which archives can affect legitimacy, can be seen in the way organizations build their physical archival spaces and determine the storage and access of documents and other materials.

Archives have previously been studied as the sites of imperial and colonial fiction, in the context of postcolonial theory (Stoler, 2009), but they have not been studied so far as sites of organizational legitimacy. The perception of the archives as legitimate is far more subjective and dependent on an individual observer. While old documents may be the same,
the presentation of the space around them differs. The line between legitimacy as a property and legitimacy as perception blurs here.

There are many different evaluators of legitimacy for an organization like Harvard Business School, all of whom evaluate it differently – business organizations, consulting groups, governments, alumni, donors, students, prospective students, visitors and guests, et cetera. As the perception view of legitimacy puts the focus for the on the perspective of the evaluator in granting an organization, group or person legitimacy, I choose to evaluate my own perception of the site at which Harvard Business School’s legitimacy is reevaluated and reified.

How and where may I find traces of this connection of legitimacy? Seeking to understand the manner in which the founding and initial mentorship of the Indian Institutes of Management was legitimized led me to the archives stored at the Baker Library at HBS and the Hayden Library at MIT in order to gather data. Harvard and MIT appear to have been perceived by the general public and academia alike as highly prestigious educational institutions during the 1950s and 1960s, a perception that has continued today. Having been an MBA student, my own education involved the use of case studies from HBS and repeatedly exposed me, implicitly or explicitly, to the idea that HBS holds a preeminent status in the field of business and management education globally. Rather than focusing on the specific contents of the documents in both archives, I choose to examine the archives in terms of their processes and their physical existence, that which is perceived.
Harvard University officially states that it does not have a formal mission statement. However, Harvard has been the center for education for Massachusetts since the 17th century, and Harvard has had a history of educating social and political elites, increasingly beginning in the 18th century and progressing towards its height of influence in the 20th and 21st centuries. Harvard, like other Ivy League colleges, has the requisite large library, a collection of old documents and books, and other items.

Harvard Business School stores many of the materials from its collections, such as books and other documents, onsite at the Baker Library, where visitors may access it at the de Gaspé Beaubien reading room after identifying themselves and filing administrative paperwork with the archivists authorizing their access to the collections.

The special collections page on the Baker Library website has the following statement explaining its history and purpose:

From its inception, Baker Library has collected rare and unique materials that focus on the evolution of business and industry. The collections span eight centuries beginning in the late 1300s to the present day and include corporate archives, manuscripts, account ledgers, rare books, broadsides, photographs, films, electronic records, and company annual reports. The HBS Archives are a vital resource as well. These rich and varied collections support research in a remarkably diverse range of fields such as business, economic, social and cultural history as well as the history of science and technology. Baker Library is committed to strengthening our contemporary archives to better understand the important theories, organizations, and individuals that have shaped the global business world today.
Collections are available for use in the de Gaspé Beaubien Reading Room on the first floor of Baker Library Bloomberg Center. Skilled business archivists are eager to assist researchers both on campus and virtually\(^1\).

The Baker Library at the Harvard Business School was built in 1927 and named for New York banker and philanthropist George F. Baker, who donated $5 million to build the entire Harvard Business School campus. The Baker Library serves Harvard students and faculty with a regular collection of books and other academic materials, although these spaces were not available for public access without special permission.

The Special Collections of the Baker Library, accessed in the de Gaspé Beaubien reading room, consist of materials spanning eight centuries of business history, having been collected since the inception of the HBS. These include materials from the offices of the HBS faculty and administrators themselves and are stored either onsite or offsite depending on their condition as well as which collection they are from. The Special Collections at the Baker Library contained materials belonging to the personal collections of previous faculty members, administrators, and alumni donors, along with collections of books, manuscripts, records and files pertinent to business and economic history donated by wealthy patrons/donors and in some cases past faculty/alumni.

Although I was focused on the work of extracting data from the archives, the commute to HBS and the small rituals involved in settling down to work became routine to me, so much so that I did not take note of their importance until later. In retrospect, it is now

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\(^1\) [https://www.library.hbs.edu/Find/Collections-Archives/Special-Collections](https://www.library.hbs.edu/Find/Collections-Archives/Special-Collections). Retrieved May 10, 2019.
evident to me how the archives at the Baker Library dictated my connections to both the data contained within as well as to the wider network of connections – between employees, processes, ideas, and the very idea of Harvard and the people who founded it.

During my visits, the atrium of the library had two historical exhibits belonging to former Harvard Business School teachers or Harvard alumni of note. Until early 2016, there was an exhibit containing Georges Doriot’s coursework and materials on Production and Operations from during the 1930s and during the Second World War in the 1940s, and from late 2016 onwards, materials belonging to alumnus Edwin Land, entrepreneur and inventor of the Polaroid camera. With the presence of large images of the featured individuals, passing through the atrium itself had the feeling of being in the presence of a museum exhibit.

The library, as with most of the older buildings present in Harvard Yard and across the river at HBS, was constructed in an old colonial architecture style to give the impression of prestige without being overly decorated, and the interiors were furnished with artifacts from Harvard history. The “old money” theme was also reflected in the décor of the physical space most immediately associated with the archive itself, the de Gaspé Beaubien reading room. One who entered was not merely in a reading room in a library, one was in Harvard in the august company of a Nobel Prize medal and centuries-old documents; and the interior decoration with its green wallpaper, spacious, elegantly carved and polished wooden desks, well-kept and comfortable rolling chairs, table lamps with brass arms and green lampshades, concealed sliding trays and inconspicuous electrical outlets, all conveyed to me an impression of old money, understated luxury and old-fashioned elegance. The 21st century
elements of the space were subtle enough that it appeared a space untouched by time; I could conceive of the reading room as a time capsule from the 1920s. The symbolic dividing line between past and present in the reading room was a small gate in a waist-high partition that separated the reading room floor from the entrance, with a locker room off to one side and a booth for the librarians on duty on the other.

From 2014 to 2016, the library contained historical items that included a 19th century filing cabinet. Former HBS faculty member Prof. Robert C. Merton’s Nobel Prize medal and citation as well as papers describing his work on the Black-Scholes equation – and even some of his old schoolwork - were placed in a corner of the reading room where the public were free to view it with the permission of the desk staff. The shelves on the walls of the reading room were covered with rare volumes on business and economic history, some of them hundreds of years old.

An effort was made to keep the space of the archive relevant to researchers, and to update it with physical reminders of Harvard’s past and its most important benefactors. Two prominently placed portraits on the wall belonged to benefactors Claude Washington Kress and Herbert Somerton Foxwell. Kress had helped the Baker Library acquire a collection of over 37,000 rare and antique books, manuscripts, broadsides and pamphlets on all subjects related to business and economics during the 1930s, forming the Kress Library of Business and Economics. Now renamed the Kress Collection of Business and Economics, it serves as a very valuable rare book collection that HBS is proud of.
In 2017, chairs and a writing desk belonging to the library’s namesake and benefactor, George F. Baker, were acquired and the filing cabinet was shifted to make way for Baker’s memorabilia. The clocks in the room were repositioned as well so that a painting of the Baker Library’s namesake, George F. Baker, could be hung high on the wall opposite those of Messrs. Kress and Foxwell. Baker’s painted face glowered down upon all visitors like Zeus reproaching mere mortals from atop Mount Olympus, his dark suit merging with the black background of his painting so that only his face, sideburned and whiskered in the 19th century manner, was visible unless one looked closely at the portrait. Here, in the physical space where archival documents pertaining to Harvard’s history could be examined, Harvard’s past benefactors were given a tangible presence to all those who raised their eyes from their desks. Within this space, all individuals of high social status, financial success, and, by extension, continuing influence on the present.

However, the curators of the memorabilia also seem to have tried to make Mr. Baker more relatable and less formidable a figure. This was including seemingly incongruous elements— one amusing picture featured the ever-stern and impeccably dressed Mr. Baker with a small furry dog (a fox terrier or similar breed) on his desk, cocking its head quizzically at the camera. Amusing and trivial as though it may be, the choice of this particular photograph of Baker with a pet dog appears a deliberate attempt to make this stern, distant, unapproachable figure from the past seem more human and likeable, much like the seemingly incongruous choice of displaying Merton’s old schoolwork alongside his Nobel Prize. Within the space of the archive, the people associated with Harvard’s past had been elevated far
beyond most visitors – Baker with his imposing portrait, Merton through the presence of his Nobel Prize medal – and yet the visitor was also meant to empathize with them after seeing the pages of schoolwork and the picture with the dog. I left with the impression that Harvard sought to keep in touch with a tradition that legitimized the role of great men, and wished to remind visitors of the role of benefactors like George F. Baker in providing them with the facilities involved. However, at the same time, little touches like the homework and the dog picture seemed to be placed there to prevent visitors to the room from being alienated altogether from Harvard’s benefactors – that they were human enough to do homework or own pets made them relatable while retaining the symbolic power of Harvard’s memory.

One of the other forms of power that the archives exerted lay in its processes, as enacted by the archival staff: the archives had their own set of rules for access, but the rules set at the Baker Library were subtly calculated to make the visitor feel like a supplicant or beneficiary of HBS. First-time visitors were asked to view an instruction video on the website and go through a list of instructions about the handling of materials before visiting the library. Although this was entirely understandable given the often fragile nature of the materials in the Special Collections, the process appeared to have the subtle overtones of religiosity, as if one were being purified before handling something sacred. After I had completed the online video, I went through an initial phase of identification through the show of a photo ID (a process carried out each academic year) before putting non-permitted items away. Bags and other belongings went into a locker, with laptop computers, paper and pencils being permitted inside the room for stationery, while bound notebooks and
pens/markers had to be left outside. Harvard’s staff would provide pencils and paper if necessary. Photographs were not permitted, but photocopies, stamped with “not transferrable, for research purposes only” in red ink, were allowed for certain documents. The documents themselves had been pre-processed to remove any files with legal restrictions, and other copying restrictions (such as on photocopies) were in place for documents in some collections (I did not access the full list of collections, so I do not know the full extent or nature of restrictions on all documents).

The processes and minor rituals involved made me feel like I was in a hallowed space, but one of the most deeply impressive aspects of my visit was the behavior of the staff, who appeared exemplary in their professionalism. The staff very helpful and responsive, whether in providing assistance with minor needs, such as in bringing stationery and weights to the table, or in helping find related documents and putting in requests for them, or in general when asked about procedures and rules. They actively sought out feedback on their service and sought to know whether anything could be improved, even whether the records might be rearranged in an order more conducive to research. In January 2016, the staff actually let me know that a large collection of materials pertinent to my research had finished processing and asked me if I was interested in having a look. I also was asked to let the staff know my weekly schedule for visiting the library in advance, so that all my requested archival materials could be made available for me accordingly. Although the physical spaces of the archive and the processes/rituals involved were somewhat intimidating, the library staff was in general impeccably polite, welcoming and helpful and
made my research visits as pleasant and fruitful as possible. Upon further reflection, their friendliness and professionalism was the most positive part of my experience in the Baker Library, and made my time there feel comfortable and pleasant to remember.

The archive’s design projects Harvard’s legitimacy through its arrangements, rituals and traditions, through the types of content within it, as well as through the content itself. While Harvard may not seem to need any active legitimization of its importance all the time, the archives do demonstrate how the organization surrounding them seeks to maintain an image of constant order, decorum and legitimacy at all times to prevent any doubt about its status from ever arising.

**Comparison: Archive at MIT**

I use my experience of the archive at MIT as a contrast to the one at HBS, because the difference in how the MIT archive functioned also affected the manner in which I perceived it and reflected about it. While the Baker Library at HBS contained its own archive, the archive contained at MIT’s Hayden Library was not exclusive to the MIT Sloan School of Management, but rather covered all of MIT’s Humanities and Science collections. Like the Baker Library at Harvard, it also functions as a working library, lending out books, journals, audiobooks and DVDs to MIT patrons.

According to the library’s website, the Hayden Library was built in 1951 and named after MIT alumnus Charles Hayden, who was a financier and philanthropist who studied “mining investment”. Neither the Sloan School of Management, nor the terms ‘management’
or ‘business education’ or any similar terms are used to describe the collections at the Hayden Library on the library’s own webpage, with the contents possibly being described using the term “MIT’s holdings in education”. The Sloan School of Management itself is a newer institution, having been established in 1952 during the post-World War Two growth in business education, as opposed to HBS’s 1908 creation as one of the first dedicated business schools in the United States.

The Hayden Library building itself appeared to have large rooms and had several large, somewhat ornate windows overlooking the rest of the MIT Campus, with a separate room featuring exhibits on the history of the MIT – the exhibit during early 2017, when I visited the room, featured the history and contributions of Chinese-Americans to MIT, complete with old photographs, documents and other such memorabilia, similar to the exhibits in the lobby of the Baker Library but rendered less conspicuous by being placed in another room.

However, the reading room in the Hayden Library was in contrast to the reading room at the Baker Library in being a space that would be best described as “utilitarian”, with plain and unadorned ceilings, walls and furniture. Aside from the large windows looking onto the rest of the MIT campus, it was a space that might have belonged to any university or library in the world. If there were any memorabilia of the library’s namesake or MIT’s history in the reading room itself, I did not notice them – in stark contrast to the de Gaspé Beaubien reading room where any items of historic significance were prominent and placed in conspicuous locations. However, the reading room featured several books of interest on the
history of the MIT and technology in general in bookcases on the wall, with one archivist showing me a book on the history of technology in India. Although the staff were helpful, polite and professional, the general impression that I had of them was that they were more distant and less warm than the HBS staff whom I had met previously.

In addition, the very layout of the room was less subdivided, with the storage area for bags and other items being a part of the reading room instead of being physically separate from it, and the archivists being behind a desk instead of being separated into an enclosure of their own. There were no physical barriers of the sort in the Baker Library.

In addition, the processes for accessing archival material at the Hayden Library were markedly different from those at the Baker Library. When at the Baker Library boxes would be placed at a researcher’s desk, at MIT the boxes would stay on their storage cart, with the cart itself being placed aside one of the desks. Removing the box from the cart was not permitted at MIT, but MIT allowed for documents to be photographed extensively. Unlike at Harvard, where all publicly available material was pre-sorted to remove personnel files and other information that was legally restricted, the personnel files at MIT were in blue folders and had to be removed by an archivist before they went to the reader. When I asked the archivists about why sensitive information was allowed in the MIT collections without being sorted into a restricted folder, as with Harvard, the archivist on duty at the time responded that the archival staff available was smaller and did not have the same resources available at Harvard.
The end impression at the Hayden Library was quite different - rather than leaving with the subconscious feeling of being a supplicant or even a beneficiary, I felt rather more like I was in an egalitarian setting, one where I was free to “do my job”. Neither the setting itself nor the behavior of the staff left the kind of impressions that the Baker Library had on me during my research.

**Discussion: Archives as influences upon their users throughout history**

My experiences with both the archives were substantially different. Both of the archives proved to be substantially different in terms of their location, the materials used in their construction, and in the processes involved with the access and use of their data. The archive belonging to Harvard Business School proved to be substantially richer and more informative, and its processes and workings proved to be richer and more interesting. HBS had a full set of records documenting its influence in establishing and mentoring the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad and more broadly on Indian management education.

The physical setup of the reading room, the rituals involved in receiving the materials, and the general appearance of HBS’s impeccably maintained campus and sense of prestige had been subconsciously reinforcing what I had been told regarding Harvard’s legitimacy and prestige. In comparison, the archives at MIT did not provide the kind of symbolic “weight” that Harvard did, through choices of architecture and ritual, and staff involvement, in addition to the manner in which materials were organized and presented. Although I also had less content for my research in MIT, on reflection I was also less impressed by them and that I did not feel as positively disposed to them.
Archives have evolved as a tool for historical testimony, with the contents of the archive being used by governments to determine what served as a legitimate history (Eskildsen, 2013). Colonial archives have served as tools of governance by colonialist and imperialist regimes in the 19th century, such as by the Netherlands in the Dutch East Indies (Stoler, 2002, 2009) or Britain across the British Empire (Richards, 1993), promoting colonial power as well as silencing anything that threatened the conception of that power, so that (ideally, although not in practice) only the data that would legitimize the colonial narratives of the time would be permitted to exist within the archive (Müller, 2013; Stoler, 2009; Trouillot, 1995). Colonial archives perpetrated the illusion of a controlled colonial reality in this manner, and helped produce this social reality, as evidenced by Catholic parish archives in Cuba that were used to help define and keep record of race status and by extension social legitimacy within Cuban society (Logan, 2010) in effect producing and re-producing these relations through their records.

My experience makes me consider the additional role of archives in influencing their users through their material and symbolic aspects. Given this history in which archives have been explicitly used to legitimize the status and position of individuals in society based on both their practical uses (content) and symbolic aspects, I ask whether the symbolic aspects of the archive are influential in changing the perception of the archives and their contents. Stoler (2002, 2009) in her study of the Dutch colonial archives in Indonesia has already detailed how 19th century colonial archives serve as a monument to legitimize colonial rule and the Dutch imperialist point of view. Taking this line of thinking further, I argue using
existing archival research that archives in general are tied to legitimation of a particular point of view, and that the perceived legitimacy of both the contents of the archive and the existence of the archives themselves is of importance. Although the information written or otherwise inscribed in the archives serves to aid the cognitive element of preservation, Derrida notes that none of the written records in an archive speak for themselves, but rather rely upon users to inscribe their interpretations upon them.

There has been extensive prior research on material and symbolic legitimacy through archives. Even in the ancient world, archives of written texts, prayers and rituals appear to have conferred the advantages of apparent legitimacy and ease of spread for ancient religions that used writing over those who used purely oral traditions (O’Toole, 1993). Cunningham (2017) in his broad review of archival history, shows that archives throughout history have been sites that provide a basis for legal authority in the form of property rights and control over citizens, historical knowledge, records of foreign trade and diplomatic agreements and the creation of subjects of state power. Archives mixed their material presence and practical usage with a symbolic sacred status in the process, in part due to their association with temples and churches, but also in their role as guarantors of the sanctity of the records within, safe from damage or alteration and thereby serving as a legitimate source of evidence in all legal, commercial and civic matters (Cunningham, 2017; O’Toole, 1993). Present knowledge, however, does not extend to any rituals or processes that might have been impressed on the users of those ancient archives to further bring about their deference.
Archival legitimation need not stem purely from the material existence of the archive, but from the material existence of an archive, where the presence of written materials during the modern era was perceived to be a necessary and sufficient condition for legitimating historical and cultural claims. Where for centuries the medieval Domesday Book could and was seen as symbolic of William the Conqueror’s rulership (O’Toole, 1993, 2002), the fictitious Clan Tartan archive was accepted as material proof of Scottish cultural superiority over the Irish and a key resource for Scottish heritage despite being entirely fabricated (Trevor-Roper, 1983). Within organizations, where physical and material factors, including space and architecture, shape and legitimize organizational memory, as Decker observed in her study of modernist corporate architecture in Ghana and its connection to the colonial modernizing project, with the use of modernist architecture being used to signal the claimed “progressivism” of colonization (Decker, 2014). At present, most of the information concerning archives and their perceived legitimacy results from the use of material within archives but tends to focus relatively little on the physical space of the archives themselves, although archival ethnographies based on postcolonial assumptions have done so – often noting the decrepit physical state of archives in previously colonized countries in the process (Decker, 2014; Trouillot, 1995) and in other instances conjuring imagery from the colonial period in which these archives were put to use (Stoler, 2009), such as that of white-suited Dutch colonial officials creating and moving documents in the spotless official archives at Batavia (Jakarta) with colonized Indonesians subservient to them in minor administrative and clerical posts.
In light of this, I consider the idea that the location and appearance of archival spaces may be potentially calculated to influence how a researcher produces knowledge. The effects of archival location and space on accessibility are known (Cunningham, 2017) as is the involvement of the community in participation (Battley, 2019). I see this brief entry into the archives at HBS and MIT Sloan as a possible way to conduct future research into how archives influence ideas of legitimacy and tradition. Eric Hobsbawm in his study about traditions wrote that they were governed by practices, these practices in turn bound by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, seeking to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, implying (and establishing) continuity with a suitable historical past (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983, p. 1). I see Hobsbawm’s research into traditions (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983, p. 9) as a plausible area for further expanded research on archives.

**Future research: Evocations, the antithesis of silences in an archive**

Some of the most detailed studies of archives have taken place in archives housed in formerly colonized countries. As a result, these studies, based on postcolonial theory, focus heavily on revealing silences in the organizational and national archives and in the process of constructing history based on the assumptions of postcolonial theory, seek to give a voice to the voiceless (Decker, 2013, 2014; Spivak, 1985a, 1985b; Stoler, 2002, 2009; Trouillot, 1995). Under these analyses, archives tend to reproduce the voice of the colonizers and tend to suppress or silence the voices of the subaltern. Archives become unreliable, flawed and biased sources; the very process of archiving is suspect, as it hides information. Outright
destruction or obstruction of archival material is not necessary, because information may be kept out of an archive through deliberate silences introduced in the archiving process itself (Trouillot, 1995, p. 26). Silencing exists due to uneven power in the production of sources, archives and narratives (Trouillot, 1995, p. 27) as well as within the very act of retrieving information from an archive; itself a form of archive creation by the retriever (Decker, 2013). What happened leaves traces (physical or textual) that limit the range and significance of any historical narrative.

Silences enter the archive at four locations – the sites of (1) fact creation, or the making of sources, (2) fact assembly, or the making of archives (3) fact retrieval, or the making of narratives and (4) retrospective significance or the making of history (Trouillot, 1995, p. 26). Silencing is an erasure more effective than the absence or failure of memory, whether faked or genuine (Trouillot, 1995, p. 60). Effective silencing is structural, brought into existence by the very manner in which records are created (Stoler, 2009; Trouillot, 1995, p. 106) and involves more than the destruction or alteration of records. Those involved in the creation of archives are simultaneously engaged in the sociohistorical process and in narrative constructions about that process (Trouillot, 1995, pp. 25–27), often habitually excluding, omitting or processing information in such a manner as to obscure ground realities (Stoler, 2009). The processes and conditions of production of those narratives matter because narratives are made of silences, not all of which are deliberate or even perceptible at the time of their production (Trouillot, 1995, p. 152). Every archive silences information in its own way but the general processes of this silencing have been investigated and understood.
At the same time, an archive is a repository of factual information. There is no such thing as a meaningless fact: all facts are meaningful by definition, even if in a minimal sense, and are not created equal: the production of traces is always also the creation of silences. Future historical narratives therefore derive from the materiality of the sociohistorical process (Trouillot, 1995, p. 29). Facts that are unthinkable or which contradict the desired colonialist or imperialist narrative can be cancelled out in generalities or be reduced to irrelevance in a heap of details (Stoler, 2009; Trouillot, 1995, pp. 97–99), such as the case when Stoler studies the “habits of the colonial heart” of the Dutch administrators and archivists in Java and how colonialists in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) chose to alter, interpret, record and store information in archives based on preconceived prejudices and colonial indoctrination, silencing the existence of both the successful (African) slave revolt against French colonialism in Haiti and political unrest by the Indo people against Dutch colonialism in Indonesia. Nevertheless, these facts exist and have been recorded.

However, rather than facts being silenced throughout the archive, some facts become more clearly visible; to silence one voice is to make another louder and better heard. I use, by analogy, Latour’s early work on laboratories and the role of Pasteur in spreading the importance of vaccination (Latour, 1983, 1988): in his study, Latour revealed the role of laboratories as sites where microbes, separated from their larger context and environment by scientists like Pasteur, and treated as actors that could be engaged in political interest work with human actors, giving them voice and agency. By analogy, an archive serves to disconnect the writings of individuals from their larger context and leave the ideas contained
within to be *evoked* or granted their own voice and agency by readers of an archive. As a corollary, the four locations identified by Trouillot as sites where silences enter the archive are also the locations at which the voice of the archive’s curators is empowered; the archiving process may make some of this information more clearly visible and easier to voice through deliberate *evocations*, as a counterpart but not exact opposite to silences. Rather than information being removed or silenced, some information may be made easier to uncover. Silences and their opposites, evocations, may be seen as products of power within the archive, changing the ordering of knowledge within them in a way that enrolls the users of the archives into the creators’ interests. However, the manner in which that knowledge is put to use is ultimately in the user’s interests, with the users enrolling the creators – indirectly – into their own network.

Some of the enrollment of interests, of de-silencing, is achieved through the material design of the archives themselves, and how they impose themselves on researchers to assemble particular kinds of histories or give voice to particular facts, with materially grander archives influencing visiting researchers to voice more positive histories. There might be a practical benefit to a more physically impressive archive: despite the seeming legitimacy and legitimizing effect of archives, they also possess information that does not serve the interests of their creators, curators or users, or reveal things unintended by their curators that a later reader may give voice to.

Archives may serve as sanctuaries of the very evidence that they silence, such as the case of how archives in Spanish colonies revealed how local religious and political
administrators took to constructing and controlling human desire and sexuality by silencing sexual or trans-racial relationships deemed ‘immoral’ or ‘unnatural’ (Tortorici, 2018). Detailed archival information may be “activated” for the purposes of its creator, but it can just as easily be “reactivated” for another (Ketelaar, 2001) – to use Ketelaar’s example, artwork and valuables belonging to Dutch Jews and confiscated or looted during German occupation in the Second World War were catalogued by both German and Dutch archivists, with the same records being used to divide the looted valuables being used to retrace them post-war, entirely the opposite of what the original records were meant for. Admittedly these two examples pertain to archives whose creators used them for malevolent purposes; but it would logically be in the interests of the creators and curators of archives that are used for less extreme purposes to induce researchers to focus on the positive rather than negative aspects of their archival legacies.

With respect to archival power over the ability to write history, or a narrative about the past, Trouillot notes that history is the fruit of power, but power itself is never so transparent that its analysis becomes superfluous, thus masking its presence in the archive. The ultimate mask of power may be its invisibility; the ultimate challenge the exposition of its roots (Trouillot, 1995, pp. xvii–xix). History, therefore becomes a story about power, a story about those who won and whose interests carried the day (Trouillot, 1995, p. 5). The past, or pastness, is itself a position that exists only because there is a present (Trouillot, 1995, p. 15) and archives serve to give the present control over the past (Schwartz & Cook, 2002). Historians may be interpreters, rather than arbiters (Bradley, 1999), of “truths”
contained within an archive although it puts them in a position where they, existing out of
time, can “play God” by breathing new life into old stories, passing judgment on the dead
and “replaying” history back and forth (Darnton, 2003). Reflecting on how archives push us
to “play God” in a particular direction and evoke certain narratives may be essential in
understanding the power of archives over historians and bringing us, as archival researchers,
farther down to earth in understanding how our power over the past need not be as absolute
as we may otherwise believe.
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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The growth and spread of business education worldwide has emerged based on models developed within the United States, and spread by a growing number of business schools across the world. The creation of a global managerial class as a result of these institutions has been deliberate and purposeful, and the end product is a limited number of individuals who serve as social and economic elites worldwide, across national boundaries. The growth of business education has split those who have had the opportunity to join the higher echelons of the global managerial class from those who have not, and, increasingly, made benefits and rewards scarcer for those who have been judged unworthy of joining the higher ranks of transnational corporations.

In choosing to follow the lead of scholarship that has investigated the planned and deliberate diffusion of management education globally and taking a historical approach, I show that this contemporary phenomenon has deep roots, having begun in the 19th century within the United States and being purposefully turned into a global phenomenon in the 20th century due to a combination of social, economic and political factors. I have reassembled

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existing information in order to further our present understanding of how meritocracy was developed within the United States (Carson, 2007; Kett, 2013), promoted within education by Charles William Eliot at Harvard (Karabel, 2005) and furthered by his personal connections to philanthropists involved in the field of education.

By demonstrating that the idea of meritocracy, which has been institutionalized as a process in business education on one hand but has been understood and enacted differently by different actors at different points in time – from, for instance, Jefferson enacting it through his writings and speeches in the form of “natural aristocracy” across America’s political scene to justify inequality to 19th century Harvard students justifying their relative social standing based on their examination grades – I show that the idea of meritocracy is itself subjective and dependent on interpretation by groups or even individuals and changing its nature depending on the relationship between the ‘judges’ and the ‘judged’.

At the same time, I trace how it moved from its essentially political interpretation to the space of management education as educators were placed under pressure by aspiring students and high society members alike to make management a profession, followed by its growing promotion at first within the United States and after the Second World War, internationally by philanthropic foundations (Khurana, 2007), thus granting meritocracy within business education an absolutist basis backed by deliberate evocations of science and the scientific measure as a means of legitimation (Carson, 2004; Jasanoff, 2004). The current system of education that promotes the role of business executives as a socioeconomic elite is therefore one possible system of global education, brought about by a set of social and
political changes within the United States and then spread due to changes in the international political environment, all the while being legitimized to suit the interests of existing social and political elites. I also make the case that it theorizing meritocracy as a non-corporeal actant under actor-network theory provides a more nuanced understanding of its development and its subjective nature than the alternative, which is to treat meritocracy as an institution and trace its transfer under institutional theory.

Following from this paper, I seek to add greater understanding by exploring an additional dimension – the potential role of business schools in directly influencing the growth of management education worldwide. I chose to examine the role that Harvard Business School (HBS) played in the 1950s and 1960s in the conceptualization and launch of the now very prominent Indian Institute of Management (IIM) at Ahmedabad. HBS, founded in 1908, has been highly influential in the field of global business education and has brought significant change to the development of business education both on its own as well as in association with foundations like the aforementioned Ford Foundation and business consultants such as McKinsey (Khurana, 2007; McDonald, 2017). IIM Ahmedabad, founded in 1961, is among the highest rated of the IIMs, which in turn constitute many of the most highly rated business schools in India – graduates of IIM Ahmedabad have significant social and economic opportunities within India and compete globally with graduates of top business schools from around the world for the same high corporate positions (Annabhai, 2011; Gupta et al., 2003). Through my research of the archival material at the Special Collections of the
Baker Library at HBS, I succeeded in shedding light on the unique contributions of HBS, as separate from the Ford Foundation.

I discovered that HBS’s involvement in IIM Ahmedabad was brought about due to the direct intervention of the institute’s first honorary director, Vikram Sarabhai, who approached HBS in opposition to the intentions of the Ford Foundation – acting contrary to the postcolonial position that individuals from developing countries had no choice in how to carry out their development. Rather, in this case, a powerful and influential man in postcolonial India sought to invite foreign involvement on his own terms and further his own, unspecified interests.

The deep dive into archival material at the Special Collections of the Baker Library at HBS, allowed me to disentangle the role and contributions of HBS proper from that of the Ford Foundation, which was also involved with IIM Ahmedabad. HBS had its own institutional interests and HBS administrators wanted the School to expand standing, legitimacy and global influence through the growth of international business education, as correspondence revealed. I studied and exposed the various signaling moves in the letters, memoranda and other documents that are saved so carefully and methodically in the archives (itself an interesting move that indicates a sense of self-legitimacy and importance) in terms of personal connections, decision points, explicitly stated interests, status markers or personal judgments of others, and references to competitor institutions. HBS’s involvement in India was a carefully considered and negotiated move, as HBS administrators sought to define a role for Harvard in a country that they saw as being of considerable importance.
Letters between the administrators also revealed that they were seeking to define a global role based on the mindset, values and assumptions prevailing during the Cold War era, in which graduate management education could reinforce free-market capitalism, industrial development and democracy in a nation whose role was perceived to be crucial in a world that appeared to be under threat of encroachment from dictatorial communism. The stated desire to develop business education under the HBS banner in India, the world’s largest democracy, was justified in correspondence as necessary for India’s development, in order to promote India’s position among developing countries and provide a viable alternative to China under its communist model. In addition to providing clarity on motivations that remained partially obscure in the official record, I provide new insights into the role of the Cold War ideological environment in providing an impetus to individual business schools in furthering management education in developing countries. I believe that this work will provide an expanded basis for the understanding of the development and prominence of business education, as well as shed light on the potential foreign policy influence of business schools, a new and relatively ignored area of study.

My third paper is a study of the material projection of legitimation through the nature and symbols of the archives and archival spaces at the Baker Library. I reviewed literature on archives that reveals their symbolic and legitimating functions across history, functions that have remained consistent from their beginnings in the ancient world and extending into the 20th century. I conducted a brief ethnographic case study of the physical spaces, rituals, and processes of the archive and how these served to legitimate HBS to itself in linking the
materials contained within the archive to the past history of HBS, its achievements, its possessions, its donors and benefactors, in effect reinforcing their identity through the development of an archival tradition. I used the ethnographic experience of visiting the archives at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a comparison, to show how the MIT, in contrast, did not use its archives as a tool to create an identity around a storied past, traditions or benefactors. My research here could provide a basis for seeing the archives and their spaces in a different light, as part of the story of an organization as well as a tool for projecting legitimacy in material form.

Overall, my dissertation explores an important historic event and its associated period in the global spread of graduate management education, when it was heavily guided and influenced by HBS. This event took place even as HBS actors made sense of their own role in global management education, elected to save their personal documents in a carefully curated archive, and set the stage for a future global managerial elite in India and beyond. I hope that the work contained here in turn sets the stage for future research regarding the role of wealthy, well-connected business schools like HBS and their influence on both education and the global economy, both at present and in the future.
Letter from Vikram Sarabhai to John B. Fox dated April 1, 1961

COPY

Physical Research Laboratory

Navarangpura

Ahmedabad 9

(India)

April 1, 1961

My dear John,

As Fritz may have told you, it has now been decided by the Government of India that the two all India Institutes of Management would be set up shortly – one at Calcutta and the other at Ahmedabad. The Ford Foundation is taking interest in both these institutes and have decided that the M.I.T. School of Industrial Management should assist the Calcutta Institute.

Prof. M. S. Thacker, the Director General, Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India, and also Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research & Cultural
Affairs, will be visiting Cambridge during the first week of April to attend the Centenary Celebrations of M.I.T. Prof. Thacker is personally concerned on the behalf of the Government of India for the development of the institute at Ahmedabad, and I would very much appreciate if you could invite him over to the Business School, so that he may visit your institution. I am interested that in the development of the Ahmedabad Institute, we should have assistance from the Business School if it is possible for you to work out a satisfactory arrangement. I am therefore writing this letter and am sending a copy of it to Prof. Thacker as well as to Fritz.

I am leaving for the United States today and will reach Cambridge on the 27th of April after visiting several universities in the north and the west on behalf of the National Science Foundation. I hope to spend two months at Cambridge, and I greatly look forward to the pleasure of meeting you and your colleagues.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Vikram A. Sarabhai

Dean John Fox

School of Business Administration

Harvard
April 5, 1961

Asst. Dean John B. Fox

Harvard Business School

Soldiers Field

Boston 63, Mass.

U.S.A.

Dear John:

Today Mr. Tulsidas Kilachand visited the College and spoke on the management of industry under the 3rd Five Year Plan. He recalls with appreciation the discussion with you about two years ago. I think his nephew is presently in the second year at HBS.

He is still determined to have a school of business administration in Bombay and is greatly disappointed that the Meriam-Thurlby report was not accepted by Bombay University and is
even more disappointed that his effort to get Doug Ensminger to get Prof. Robbins here likewise has not resulted in a school of business administration for Bombay. He is still determined that Bombay should have an institution.

You may have heard or be hearing that Vickram[sic] Sarabhai was trying to get HBS substituted for UCLA as collaborated in the Ahmedabad Institute of Industrial Administration which the Ford Foundation is sponsoring as a companion to the one in Calcutta which will be conducted by M.I.T. You might mention this to Stan Teele because my good intentions of writing him in more orderly level are letting too much time elapse. I was only a bystander in a conversation which Doug Ensminger was having with John Coleman but I am sure there is no secret of the Ford Foundation’s position that they have entered into arrangements with UCLA and that as far as they are concerned this is a fixed condition of the Ahmedabad project. Should Vickram[sic] Sarabhai make any overtures, I hope that Stan may feel able to exert his usual imaginative open mind. While it looks very improbable that Harvard should have another official contractual relationship, I have great admiration for the Ahmedabad Business Community and hope that some of our colleagues might be able to spend some time there eventually.

Yours cordially,

A.R.Towl
Memorandum from John B. Fox to R. H. Hassler dated April 10, 1961

MEMORANDUM

TO: Associate Dean Russell H. Hassler

FROM: John B. Fox

April 10, 1961

Dear Russ:

While in some ways I would prefer to report to you orally, perhaps there is some wisdom in trying to report on my conversation with Professor Thacker in the form of this memorandum.

I picked up Thacker at the Ritz at 10:00 a.m. in the morning and brought him out to my office. On the way out and for about 15 minutes after he arrived at the School, we talked about Mrs. Chowdhry’s forthcoming visit and Thacker agrees that they should pay Mrs. Chowdhry’s air fare here and back and said that he was sure that whatever arrangements were developed for her stipend would be satisfactory.

As you will see from the copy of Sarabhai’s letter which is attached, Thacker’s real reason for coming to talk with us was to explore the possibility of Harvard’s interesting itself in some kind of relationship with the Institute of Administration at Ahmedabad. Harry Hansen very nicely joined us and he was present for all the conversations regarding this question with Thacker. Harry told his plans with Frank Folts to conduct an intensive program with the Bombay group lasting about ten days and starting around the 2nd or 3rd or thereabouts of June. It seemed quite certain that Thacker would like to visit this program while it is in
operation, but failing that he was most anxious for Harry to stop over in New Delhi after the program for further talks.

Thacker told us that two management institutes are at present contemplated. One is in Calcutta, with which apparently M.I.T. is already to go. Howard Johnson and a Professor Hill are the key figures. The only other similar institute at least for the moment will be in Ahmedabad and Thacker said that with the latter he hoped Harvard would be willing to furnish advice, staff and training facilities. The steps that he suggested that we take are as follows:

In the first place, he said that just as soon as Vikram Sarabhai arrived in Cambridge, which will be on or about April 27th, we should get in touch with one another and have preliminary discussions. Thacker wanted to make sure that Sarabhai as representing Ahmedabad really wished to have Harvard’s participation. This rather curious way of putting the thing was clarified I think by Andy Towl’s letter to me of April 5th where he tells me that Ahmedabad and the Ford Foundation are really involved with U.C.L.A. and that Sarabhai wants to have HBS substituted for U.C.L.A. This fact Thacker did not mention, but it was left that immediately after the conversations with Sarabhai, I should write, or someone from here should write to Thacker and tell him the results of these deliberations. Thacker was very anxious I think himself to have HBS in a relationship with Ahmedabad and he said that the next step, provided Sarabhai and we agreed, would be to have someone from Harvard come out to India for about a month and study the situation first hand.
It would seem to me that we have between now and Sarabhai’s arrival time to decide whether this is something we want to have something to do with or not. If we do decide that we are interested, I think we should then try to agree among ourselves just how we would like to proceed before we talk with Sarabhai. I suppose it would be a little overdramatic to say this may be our last chance to do something sizeable in India, but I am rather inclined to think that we may not have another chance for some years and so I would guess we would want to think this through quite carefully.

I do not know what more to add. Clearly Thacker himself is a highly intelligent person. He seems to move around just under the level of prime ministers and what not. Harry and I both wanted to tell him a little bit about HBS, but he felt that he had followed our programs closely and knew enough about our philosophy and approach so that he was convinced that Harvard could perform a very important role at Ahmedabad. He was interested in Harry’s activities in the Philippines, especially the forthcoming four man research group.

Finally, Thacker stressed the point that whatever developed in Ahmedabad would be an effort combining the Ford Foundation, the business community, the Government of India, and Harvard. Incidentally[sic], both Calcutta and Ahmedabad draw on all of India for their student body, but Thacker stressed what I think we already know a bit about; namely, the emergence of a dynamic professional class of business managers in the Ahmedabad area.
I think I have included all the essentials of our conversation. Needless to say, during the course of the two hours we did touch on a variety of related subjects.

JBF: nwm

Cc: Professor Harry L. Hansen

Professor Fritz J. Roethlisberger
TO: Dean Stanley F. Teele

FROM: Harry L. Hansen

Dear Stan:

John Fox asked me if I could meet with him and a Professor Thacker from India who has been attending the MIT Convocation on last Saturday morning, April 8. This I did.

The discussion leads me to conclude that a time has been reached when we will have to “fish or cut bait” in any major role in India.

The essence of the matter is that the Indian government has decided to have two management institutes in India at Calcutta and Ahmedabad. MIT is to advise and assist in the Calcutta operation. Professor Thacker, representing himself and others informally in India, wants Harvard to do the other.

Once these two institutes are established nothing further of major scope is planned.

Since 1956 and 1957 the situation in India with regard to management training has greatly changed. Where once we properly dragged our heels I think now we should move, and move
with some alacrity. If we do not we may not have the decision about India to make in the future and in view of MIT’s move I would expect we might regret this.

I have a special interest in view of our multinational company proposals. A “base” in India could be of great benefit for future research. It would of course be of a different nature than our Philippine “base” but it would open up similar research opportunities. I think it is worth pointing out that research directly on the multinational company must be accompanied by some research on the industrial infrastructure within which the multinational company operates. (See for instance C. Wickham Skinner’s current DBA thesis “Production Management of U.S. Manufacturing Subsidiaries in Turkey” for a review of the significances of the industrial infrastructure. ) An Indian base would greatly assist this.

What should we do? I would suggest that when Vikram Sarabhar[sic] is here at the end of April that:

1. We should express a sincere interest in Ahmedabad.

2. Depending upon these discussions you should be prepared to fly to India this summer or fall to make a high-level size up of the situation.

3. We should seek to get a cadre of Indians here next fall in our ITP who would be associated in the development of the activity.

4. We should send back with them in the summer of 1962 a chief advisor with a younger man as a case writing director, and recruit from the 1961-1962 class a small group of case writers to go with them. (There is, as you know, a growing interest among our students in being “of
use” overseas in developing countries. We can both see some very useful ways to prepare a
group such as our Filipino group for an Indian venture.)

5. We should commit ourselves to conducting a summer AMP under the Institutes
sponsorship for a period of 3-5 years.

I don’t believe that such a program would be a real drain on the School because it helps keep
our major contribution in the summer. On the contrary it would enhance our international
image and open up a significant new research area for the multinational center.

cc. Associate Dean R.W. Hassler [sic – R.H. Hassler is his real name]

Assistant Dean J.B. Fox

Professor Fritz Roethlisberger
MEMORANDUM

To: Dean Stanley F. Teele

From: R. H. Hassler

At your suggestion I talked to George Robbins on April 12 about his and UCLA’s interest in and connections with the Indian Institutes of Management.

As you know, George went to India last year for the Ford Foundation to make a study of India’s needs for management education. In his report to the Foundation George suggested one institute. He suggested that the institute not be connected with any university. The Indian government wanted two institutes or centers, and early proposed Calcutta and Bombay. He tells me that the Ford Foundation has now agreed to the creation of two institutes to be run by the Indian government with Ford Foundation financial support. The Ford Foundation and the Indian government have already completed an agreement with M.I.T. to operate an institute at Calcutta. The location for the other institute has now been fixed for Ahmedabad. George tells me that the Indian government has requested UCLA to run the Ahmedabad Institute and the Ford Foundation has agreed. He says that his position and the position of UCLA at this point is that they have not made up their mind whether they should or should not do this. He would like to have one of his staff spend six weeks studying the problems involved before UCLA makes up its mind whether to accept the request from the Indian government.
George says that there is considerable political maneuvering going on between various Indian officials. He thinks, however, that when the chips are down the Ford Foundation will decide what school, etc. He points out that Thacker, whom he knows quite well, has asked George to be the Director of the Ahmedabad school and for UCLA to be the sponsoring U.S. school. George has turned down Thacker’s request to be the director. He says that Thacker is the man who heads the research and development activities of India.
April 18, 1961

Professor Harry L. Hansen
Morris House 12

Dear Harry:

I appreciate having your suggestions on how to handle Sarabhai’s visit. They are very good.

Sincerely,

Stanley F. Teele
Dean
Letter from George F. F. Lombard to John B. Fox dated April 18, 1961

To: John B. Fox

From: George F. F. Lombard

I appreciate having the opportunity to look over your and Harry’s memoranda concerning Professor Thacker’s visit. The next weeks will certainly present the school with a unique opportunity for helping in the development of an important leadership training program in India.

In connection with these possibilities, I would like to bring to your attention the following points:

1. Rolf and Ronnie Lynton, who have been running the Aloka program, will be visiting the school during the latter part of Vikram Sarabhai’s visit next month. So far as I know, their future plans are not settled. But whether they are or not, their and Sarabhai’s presence at the same time will bring together here at the School the small number of people who have (a) high interest in, (b) high competence for, and (c) high familiarity with the problem of leadership training in India. At the same time, these people are (d) highly motivated to do something about it; and (e) placed highly enough in organizations in India to effect a worthwhile program – we now know as a result of your conversations with Professor Thacker – with the backing of the Government of India.
Surely not taking advantage of this opportunity is, as your memorandum suggests, tantamount to a decision on the part of the School to do nothing in India at least for the next decade and possibly for the next generation.

2. Another tie which the School has with these efforts is through Mr. T. J. Sethi, MBA 1958. He is a member of a family important in the management of a large textile firm in India (8,000 employees). I infer that this firm is a contributor to ATIRA, Sarabhai’s research and training institute at Ahmedabad.

3. Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Head of the Department of Human Relations at ATIRA, will be working with the Organizational Behavior group here at the school next year.

April 18, 1961

cc. Dean Teele

    Assoc. Dean Hassler

    Prof. Roethlisberger

    Prof. Hansen
April 18, 1961

TO: Dean Stanley F. Teele

FROM: Harry L. Hansen

Dear Stan:

Just after leaving you Henrietta Lawson[sic: her surname is Larson] appeared with a Mr. Nanabhoy Davar who is a Sloan Fellow at MIT and who comes from Bombay. He wanted to see me since I know his brother who runs a business college in Bombay.

Mr. Nanabhoy Davar reported:

1. “that MIT’s effort in Calcutta is to build an institution giving MBA degrees.”

2. “that California” was to do the same in Ahmedabad.

It seems to me that a way to handle Sarabhai’s visit would be to (1) listen to all he says (2) clearly show we do not want to interfere with UCLA (3) indicate our interest and open-mindedness concerning India (4) suggest we might be more helpful if we could concentrate on training practitioners rather than degree candidates (5) and ask his advice as to how this
might be done. I think (4) above would be more suited to our skills and resources, and we would also not be in conflict with UCLA.

cc. Associate Dean R. W. Hassler [sic – his name is R.H. Hassler]

      Associate Dean J. B. Fox
Letter from John B. Fox to Prof. M. S. Thacker dated May 4, 1961

May 4, 1961

Professor M. S. Thacker

Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs

New Delhi, India

Dear Professor Thacker:

I am sure you will recall the conversation that Professor Hansen and I had with you on Saturday morning, April 8th.

You suggested that as soon as we had had a chance to talk with Dr. Vikram A. Sarabhai that we should write to you. Yesterday morning, May 3rd, Professor F. J. Roethlisberger, Professor H.L. Hansen, and I had a meeting with Dr. Sarabhai, and Dr. Sarabhai requested that the Harvard Business School consider whether or not they were in a position to assist in the development of programs in business administration at Ahmedabad.

We are now in the process of determining in a very preliminary fashion whether or not we have the appropriate manpower available to consider such an undertaking.

Sincerely yours,

John B. Fox

JBF: nwm
MEMORANDUM

TO: Dean Stanley F. Teele
FROM: John B. Fox

On Wednesday morning, May 3rd, from approximately 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai of the Physical Research Laboratory at Ahmedabad discussed with Professors Roethlisberger and Hansen and myself the question of Harvard participation in the development of programs of business administration at Ahmedabad.

Perhaps it is in order in the first place to make a few general remarks. From the outset it was apparent that Sarabhai was not trying to hide anything from us. There was nothing devious about either his behavior or his remarks. He was entirely frank and open at all time.

Sarabhai is an extremely competent person and was visiting us as a representative of the Ahmedabad group which is concerning itself with the establishment of programs in business administration at this location. It will be recalled that when Professor Thacker was here, which was reported to you in my memorandum of April 10th and Professor Hansen’s memorandum of April 11th, Professor Thacker was representing the Government of India.
Thacker was unable though to speak for Ahmedabad and asked us to talk with Sarabhai to see if he, Thacker, was correct in his assumption that Sarabhai representing the Ahmedabad group would request Harvard’s assistance.

It was completely clear in the conversation that Sarabhai was asking Harvard in a formal manner to talk on the development of business administration programs at Ahmedabad. For the purposes of his first visit, Sarabhai asked us to assume for a moment if we would that U.C.L.A. was not involved and said he thought that this was a reasonable assumption because in his judgment the Indians should have something to say about what institution or institutions should be invited to give assistance.

Sarabhai suggests that approximately ten Indians should be selected and sent to Harvard for special training in research techniques, teaching methods, and some background in area specialization. He suggests that two or three Harvard faculty members at any one time be present in India for varying lengths of time. Probably one of these should be a fairly senior faculty member and while I do not think Sarabhai ever became completely definite in this respect, I got the impression that he was more than willing to entertain the idea of having competent junior members of our staff participate.

I do not think the details of Sarabhai’s thinking beyond these two areas are very important because while clearly he has done some thinking about how to proceed, I think at the same time he is very much open to suggestions and would be completely reasonable. Perhaps I
should add though that he sees the development of a middle management program as the first step in the educational offerings. This would give both the Indian and American staff an opportunity to try out their material and presentations on a group with some experience and from this beginning there would then come an M.B.A. program and an advanced management program. The students would be drawn from all of Indian in accordance with the Government of India’s requirements.

Sarabhai went on to mention that the capital costs, and he did not elaborate on this, would be covered by industry. Apparently the site of the buildings has already been given by the local state and I imagine that the buildings would be given by industry. The training costs would be covered by the Ford Foundation, but here he said if there was any problem he was convinced that the U.S. Government’s technical mission would be more than willing to make funds available.

There seems to be now doubt now but what there are to be two centers for business administration established in India. One is to be in Calcutta and M.I.T. has already assumed the responsibility for the development there. Sarabhai realizes that Ensminger would like to have U.C.L.A. do the Ahmedabad project. Sarabhai regards Ensminger as more of a politician, as he puts it, than an objective scientific representative of a foundation. Sarabhai was not clear why Ensminger seemed to be rather unenthusiastic about Harvard and I offered one possible explanation; namely, the difficulties surrounding the Merriam-Thurlby mission. Sarabhai added that it was most unfortunate that Sir John Mathai ceased to be Vice-
Chancellor of Bombay either during or shortly after the Meriam-Thurlby visit and added that Dr. Advani who succeeded him gave a very low priority to business administration. Apparently there is now another Vice-Chancellor, but what his attitude is was not discussed. However, in any event Bombay is not now being considered as a location for one of the two institutes of business administration.

Sarabhai was impressed with the Robbins report and there seems to me no question but what somehow or other we should try to get hold of this report and I feel a little silly that we did not ask Sarabhai when he was here if he had a copy with him, although I suspect had he had one he would have given it to us. However, along these same lines, it is clear that Sarabhai and the Ahmedabad group do not intend to allow the Ford Foundation to force them into a relationship with U.C.L.A until they have at least discovered that Harvard is unable to assume the task.

We explored, despite these two developments, the possibility and usefulness of Harvard’s continuing to give short courses of an advanced management type. Sarabhai said that he did not question the usefulness of such courses, but he felt it would be extremely difficult for Harvard to find any sponsorship in India because as he pointed out the All Indian Management Association with Ford Foundation assistance was putting on the program conducted by M.I.T. in Kashmir and that the I.L.O. in connection with the Indian National Productivity Centers was putting on two weak programs for vice presidents. There are two
other bodies that might conceivably be willing to assist in this connection, but they appeared to Sarabhai as being a little off the direct line.

The above activities plus the activity in Calcutta and Ahmedabad I interpret as meaning that if we wish to do anything in India in the foreseeable future, we must take up the Ahmedabad affair. This is no different from the conclusion that was reached in conversation with Thacker where both Harry and I felt that this was the last opportunity that would be offered to the Harvard Business School so far as India is concerned for the next decade or so. As usual I have a few ideas as to how we might proceed, but I do not think they are appropriate to include in this memorandum which as far as I am concerned is a not very satisfactory summary of our meeting with Vikram Sarabhai, but at least I do not think it has any inaccuracies.

JBF: nwm
May 15, 1961

Dean Stanley F. Teele Morgan 130

Dear Stan:

This is a chronological summary that I hope is of some use.

Sincerely yours,

John B. Fox

JBF: nwm

Enclosures: 2

Chronological Summary of Discussions and Correspondence Regarding Possible Relationships Between the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad and the Harvard Business School

1. Letter dated April 1st from Vikram A. Sarabhai, prominent member of the Ahmedabad business community and Director of the Physical Research Laboratory at Ahmedabad,
requesting John Fox to talk with Professor M.S. Thacker, Director General of Scientific and Industrial Research of the Government of India and Secretary to the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, New Delhi, India. Sarabhai’s letter tells us that Thacker is to be at the M.I.T. Centennial Celebrations and asks us to invite him over to the Business School. Letter also says that he, Sarabhai, would like to have assistance from HBS in the development of the Ahmedabad Institute. Copies of this letter to F. J. Roethlisberger and Thacker. Sarabhai is both a professional and personal friend of F. J. Roethlisberger, who met him in India, and Sarabhai also known to J. Fox and Roethlisberger during an earlier visit to M.I.T. when he evidenced much interest in HBS.

2. Thacker visits HBS and talks with Professor Harry L. Hansen and J. Fox for two hours on April 8th. Professor Roethlisberger absent only because of illness. Thacker wishes to explore with HBS the possibility of HBS interesting itself in working with Institute at Ahmedabad. He tells us a little bit about the recommendation that two management institutes are to be established, one in Calcutta with M.I.T. support, where Dean Johnson and Professor Hill of M.I.T. are the key figures. Thacker also made it clear that until we had met with Sarabhai late in April and had from Sarabhai the assurance that Ahmedabad was anxious for Harvard’s participation, there was nothing further to be done, except it was clear that the Government of India would like to have HBS participate. Thacker asked that we write him after we had talked with Sarabhai and let him know if Sarabhai did request HBS participation. The Institute at Ahmedabad would be a joint effort concerning the Ford Foundation, the business
community of Ahmedabad, the local state and the Indian government and both the Institute at Calcutta and the Institute at Ahmedabad would draw on all of India for their students.

3. Letter received dated April 5\textsuperscript{th} from Andy Towl telling us that Ahmedabad and the Ford Foundation are involved with U.C.L.A., but Sarabhai wants to have HBS substituted for U.C.L.A.

4. Associate Dean Hassler, after talking with Dean Teele, calls George Robbins, Associate Dean of U.C.L.A., on the telephone. Dean Robbins, as we knew, had been in India last year for the Ford Foundation. His report was very favorably received by the Ford Foundation and the Government of India and it recommended two institutes or centers, one in Calcutta and one in Bombay. Bombay was subsequently dropped and Ahmedabad substituted as the second location. U.C.L.A. has not decided whether they will interest themselves or not, but will have someone study the situation further before deciding whether U.C.L.A. will accept a request from the Indian government or not. Robbins tells Dean Hassler that Thacker had asked him, Robbins, to be Director of the Ahmedabad School, but that Robbins turned this down.

5. Memos from Fox and Hansen summarizing conversations with Thacker prepared and sent to Hassler and Teele. Fox’s memo dated April 10\textsuperscript{th} and Hansen’s memo dated April 11\textsuperscript{th}.
6. Meeting with Dr. Vikram Sarabhai on May 3rd for two hours and one-half. Present were Professors Hansen and Roethlisberger and J. Fox. Sarabhai representing the Ahmedabad community makes a formal request to HBS to participate in the development of business administration programs at Ahmedabad and asks that as soon as possible Harvard indicate whether or not it is interested in following up this request. Sarabhai tells us a little as to why Bombay was dropped and Ahmedabad substituted. Also tells us of the favorable impressions he has of the Robbins report and implies that if Harvard says it is interested, he will then follow matters up with the Ford Foundation. Memorandum from J. Fox to Dean Teele dated May 4th summarizing Sarabhai’s visit.

7. Brief letter dated May 14th sent to Thacker saying that conversations have been held with Sarabhai and that Sarabhai did formally request HBS to consider assisting and Ahmedabad and stating that in a preliminary fashion HBS was now holding discussions as to whether or not this was feasible.

8. May 11th meeting of Dean Hassler, Professors Hansen and Roethlisberger, and J. Fox at which meeting it was decided to suggest to Dean Teele that he discuss with the Ford Foundation the request that had been made of HBS and clearly bring into the discussion at the outset the fact that we are aware that U.C.L.A. has been approached by the Government of India and with the approval of both the Ford Foundation in India and New York.
9. Professors Hansen and Folts will be in Bombay on May 30th, Bangalore June 1st to the 10th conducting an intensive Management Development Seminar, returning to Bombay June 11th, and departing Bombay at latest June 15th. Baguio Seminar completed August 28th and both Hansen and Folts might have time available then to return to India as neither have class commitments at HBS in the fall. Letter from Towl dated April 29th describes Summer Case Seminar at Hyderabad which would seem to remove Towl as a possibility to conduct an investigation for HBS. Dean Robbins mentioned that U.C.L.A. exploration not going forward until late in the fall.

10. Sarabhai notified of Dean Teele’s plans to meet with Mr. David of the Ford Foundation.

11. It probably is well to bear in mind that late in 1956 and early in 1957 Professor Meriam of HBS and Professor Thurlby of Cornell wen to the India and prepared a report entitled “On the Establishment of the Proposed Institute of Management Studies at the University of Bombay.” There is some reason to believe that a variety of problems arose both while Professors Meriam and Thurlby were in India and after their return and this may have a bearing on the situation.
Letter from John B. Fox to Harry L. Hansen dated June 5, 1961

June 5, 1961

Professor Harry L. Hansen

c/o Mr. N. S. Pochkhanawala

D & P Products, Limited

Bombay-Agra Road

Bhandup, Bombay 78, India

Dear Harry:

I was very sorry that when you came up to say good-by, I was not here. I think at that very moment I was over with Stan listening to Vikram Sarabhai’s presentation of his position as to the possible future relationship between HBS and the Institute of Business Administration at Ahmedabad.

Following Stan’s instructions, I had been trying to reach Bob Culbertson, an acquaintance of mine over many years as I think I told you, whom I first met in Istanbul in 1955 as I recall it. Bob was the “expert” whom Don David had called in after he had learned of George Gant’s unavailability and who now shows in the Ford Foundation Annual Report as being a Program Associate for South and Southeast Asia under the general category of Overseas Development. It is unfortunate, but I do not think it really made any difference, that the first
time I tried to reach Bob over the telephone he, too, was in Washington, however I was able to get hold of him shortly before I had to meet Vikram to go in to see Stan. I say that I do not think it made any difference because the only sort of new twist that Culbertson gave was that the Ford Foundation was trying to get Tom Hill of M.I.T. and Vikram to go to Los Angeles to talk to Robbins sometime during the week of June 4th.

This did, however, I think without question confirm the position that Fritz had taken all along that Vikram himself was not seeking to develop negotiations with U.C.L.A. at all. You will recall that as a result of Stan’s meetings in New York, he obtained the impression that Vikram had already gone to U.C.L.A., probably on his own initiative, and this made some of us wonder momentarily if Vikram wasn’t carrying water on both shoulders. To this of course Fritz took strong exception, maintaining all along what I think is clear to all of us now that Vikram is an entirely reliable individual and is simply interested in trying to find out if HBS would be willing to undertake the development of the Ahmedabad Institute.

It seemed to me that the meeting between Vikram and Stan and myself went off very well. Stan I think quite naturally as a sort of opening gambit expressed surprise that Vikram was in Boston and not in Los Angeles because of the information that he had received earlier in New York. Vikram then went ahead and told of the long standing interest in Ahmedabad in executive development, which had included among other things programs for managing directors or heads of companies when it was learned earlier on that no management
development programs were as effective as they might be unless the support and understanding of the top men were clearly obtained.

During the conversation, which lasted one hour, it seemed to me at least that it was quite clear that the Ford Foundation had in effect tried to ram through a contract with U.C.L.A. and had to a very considerable extent either not consulted or ignored the feelings of the people in Ahmedabad. In fact there is some reason to believe that the Ford Foundation had gone so far and so fast in this direction that now when they found the Ahmedabad people had different ideas, they were attempting to get involved in a kind of fence mending operation. I would guess that there is also a complication of this sort; namely, that U.C.L.A., which incidently has until July 1st to decide whether or not they will take up the contract or not, according to Culbertson is rather reluctant to go ahead if the Ahmedabad group is either not interested in U.C.L.A. or more difficult still, does not want them.

It would also appear that the Ford Foundation is trying to maneuver, which is the best word I can think of, Vikram into changing his mind in this respect and letters from Coleman, Ensminger’s assistant in New Delhi, to Vikram and the idea of Vikram going to U.C.L.A. seem to bear this out. Vikram has shown to Stan, to me, and to Fritz a letter that Coleman wrote him and his reply which confirms this position.

We now have had a chance to look briefly at Robbins’ report, which Vikram kindly obtained for us. I do not think there is anything to be gained by trying to summarize the report beyond
saying that it does contain recommendations for two institutes, recommendations for middle, advanced, and M.B.A. programs, some suggestion as to the number of Americans to be involved in India and the number of Indians to be trained in this country with a time table and budgetary suggestions and lastly emphasis on the importance of heavy reliance on the Government of India bureaus and centers already engaged in the study of management development problems.

Stan did say to Vikram when he left that we would undertake as soon as possible to see if we were in a position in terms of manpower so that we could very shortly give an indication of our own capabilities. Subsequent informal conversations mostly between Russ and Fritz with yours truly not present at all of them, but at least partly informed, point to Fritz’s on a friendly basis encouraging Vikram to tell the Ford Foundation of his lack of enthusiasm for U.C.L.A. before we commit ourselves one way or another. Vikram of course I think wanted to have some assurances from HBS that were interested before he took this step, but Russ’s suggestion is that this is not necessary or possible at this moment.

Fritz I should add continues to emphasize that this is a very simple direct question that Vikram is raising with us and that all we need to do is to give him a very simple direct answer. I think I understand Fritz’s position that there is a rise of unnecessary complication here and probably I have been guilty either of obsessive or worse still distorted thinking in this matter and Fritz as you can well imagine says that let’s keep the complication where it
belongs in the territory, if indeed there is complication there, at least at this moment and in our personal relations stick to the facts as we know them.

If you picked up anything along your travels, I know Stan or I would be very much interested to hear from you and I am sure that either Stan, Russ, or I will be in touch with you again. Hope the Bangalore Program was a success and that everything will go well in Baguio.

I was very sorry indeed to hear of the death of your mother. Of course I told Miss Simms that if there was anything I could do for her not to hesitate to get in touch with me, but she said that you made such complete plans that everything was already taken care of. However, I hope that there is no need for me to say that if you and Carolyn ever do need anything that we could help you with, you will not hesitate to sing out.

As ever,

John B. Fox

JBF: nwm
Dear Harry,

Because I am not sure whether you ever got my letter of June 5th, I am sending this copy of it to you in Baguio. Let me assure you right off that I am not anxious for you to acknowledge it, but I thought that if you had not seen it that it might interest you.

I have just sent a memorandum to Stan because he asked for my reactions to the last paragraph of your memorandum to him and I am including a copy of this memorandum to Stan. I think it is large self-explanatory and after Stan, Russ, and I have talked this matter over, I am sure that one or all of us will be writing you again.

I think the only thing I have to add that I did not put in the memo is that while I am satisfied that probably the only way to make the quickest impact on the Indian economy is through an Advanced Management Program, I do share the opinions of both Robbins and Sarabhai that training at this level must be accompanied quite quickly, say in two or three years, with a longer program in business administration for young Indians. If the Indian economy is growing at the rate people say it is, it would seem to me that the acute shortages are going to show up very soon in the middle and lower management areas and it would seem to me that our proposal for our Advanced Management effort would be considerably strengthened if we made some mention of our awareness of the emerging needs of these other two levels.

As ever,

John B. Fox
MEMORANDUM

TO: Dean Stanley F. Teele                July 18, 1961

FROM: John B. Fox

Dear Stan:

Harry as you know sent me a copy of his memorandum of June 30th addressed to you.

I had written a rather long letter to him which I do not think he ever received, because we sent it to India and while theoretically it had time to reach him, my hunch is that if he had received it, he would have at least dropped me a note. I am therefore planning to send him a copy of the letter which I happen to have on hand and to which I have added a couple of paragraphs. This letter is attached and if you feel that it is all right to send out along with a copy of my memo to you, fine; however, maybe you feel that what I have said needs either to be changed or expanded.

I feel that we are in a kind of dilemma at this moment. It is my understanding that Vikram Sarabhai was going to write a second letter to Culbertson and that he would send me a copy of this letter. If he did write such a letter, I never received a copy, but maybe in the last
minute rush to get away, which I think with Vikram must have been particularly hectic, this slipped his mind.

It was my understanding that U.C.L.A. would make a decision whether or not to go ahead with their exploration and implementation of the Institute of Business Administration by July 1st. It would seem to me that the simplest way to proceed would be to have Russ, who knows George Robbins probably better than any of us, call George and see what the decision was. If U.C.L.A. is going to go ahead alone then I think Harry’s last paragraph should be discussed and we should decide whether or not we want to start correspondence with Galbraith. However, if U.C.L.A. has turned the matter down, then I suppose we should expect that the Ford Foundation might be in touch with us either to go in on a joint basis with other U.S. business schools or to do certainly what I think Vikram would prefer; namely, to take the whole project by ourselves. However, clearly the latter possibility is something that once again would have to be discussed very fully particularly with Harry’s comments about the problems surrounding this kind of undertaking.

I think from all this that you can see I am in a state of confusion which I do not seem able to resolve. One way of stating this is – should we go ahead and follow up Harry’s suggestions and do what we think is most suitable at the moment and which undoubtedly would be effective and have an impact or – two, should we try to follow through on the recommendations of the Robbins’ Report, which clearly has the support of the Indian
government and certainly impressed as far as we know quite a number of Indian businessmen and educators.

I have known Ken Galbraith for quite a number of years. I would not claim that I know him well, but sometimes I wonder if anybody knows him well, and I would be only too glad to write him a sort of exploratory letter enlarging a bit on Harry’s suggestions and telling him that this is one alternative possibility that we would be willing to entertain, if you think such a letter would be advisable. It would seem to me that sometime we might find it useful for Russ, you and me to sit down for a few months together.
Many thanks for your letter of April 21. I am especially interested to learn of the Bombay Conference to be held by Professors Harry Hansen and Franklin Folts. I am sure that they will be well received and will make an important contribution to the Indians.

Our position with respect to the proposed Institute of Management at Ahmedabad should be quite clearly understood. The Indian representative of the Ford Foundation has asked us if we
would consider the matter of assisting the Institute in its early years. We have made no
commitment and will not do so until we have had a formal request. We are not seeking to
define a role for ourselves.

I shall be pleased personally to learn of the experiences of Professors Hansen and Folts in
Bombay because of my experience out there. Best wishes.

Sincerely,

George W. Robbins
Associate Dean

GWR:rs
Letter from Harry L. Hansen to Kamla Chowdhry dated December 26, 1962

December 26, 1962

Dear Kamla:

This will be the last letter before the arrival of the group, and indeed it may come shortly after you see them. And so I will begin it by saying, good luck.

With regard to the evening arrangements, there is strong resistance against them here on two counts: (1) The daily interviewing workload is going to be very heavy, and the energies of the team should be devoted to that; (2) I often think of India as being full of Americans going around giving lectures. We want our group, in a very polite way, to listen to people and not to talk to them. Naturally you have some problems of your own, but I hope you will minimize any evening appearances.

Last Friday the group had lunch with Mr. Ensminger during my unfortunate absence, and I gather there was some dynamic discussion about lecturing. Consequently, I think you have already heard by cable that they are not sending out any exact titles of their talks.

Incidentally, your brochure also arrived today, and it looks fine, I will write a page or two about the Harvard Business School that you can incorporate in a later version.

I am very sorry I have not written you clarifying the financial aspects of the team’s travel in India. This will all be paid for from the grant made to us so you will incur no rupee expense.
on part of the Institute. You, of course, will really have to worry about reservations for the group, but I know you are expecting this.

We are sending you 40 copies of “Planning for Change” by air. You understand, of course, that this is not the curriculum that the Business School has chosen to follow precisely. In other words, it should be made clear that this was a working document rather than a final report.

Best regards,

Sincerely,

Harry L. Hansen
Letter from Henry B. Arthur to George Lombard dated March 9, 1964

March 9, 1964

To: Dean George Lombard  
From: Professor Henry B. Arthur  
Subject: Lunch with G.D. Parikh, Rector, University of Bombay, March 6, 1964

I am passing on a couple of brief comments in an effort to pin down two or three observations regarding the institutions at Ahmedabad and Bombay, while they are still in mind.

1. Mr. Parikh and others at the University of Bombay were somewhat distressed during our visit to them in January, 1963. It seems to me that Mr. Parikh’s visit may evidence some mending of the strained attitudes of the year earlier. It also suggests the possibility of further cooperative arrangements (see below)

2. The decision to go ahead at Ahmedabad and Calcutta with management institutions independent of the universities may be working out very well from the viewpoint of all concerned. The two elements that suggested the course adopted would be a wise one were as follows:

a. The establishment of the Institute in Ahmedabad may have provided a competitive spur both to the University of Bombay and to the business community. Thus the university is starting on a program which is conceived as indigenous rather than foreign-supported. There
should be room for a considerable activity along this line throughout India, without any necessity of “destructive” competition.

b. The terms established with respect to academic freedom, salary levels, research, and consultation at Ahmedabad may have served as a precedent to enable the University of Bombay to shake loose some of the institutional restraints of the established university when it undertook to set up a graduate institute of management. A breakthrough was clearly needed here.

3. There should be opportunities for cooperative relationships between the Ahmedabad Institute, The Harvard Business School and The Bombay University Program. This may well include (a) cooperation with respect to Ahmedabad research projects located in Bombay (b) faculty exchanges between Ahmedabad and Bombay, (c) possible joint research activities by faculty members of the two institutes and (d) friendly cooperation between the Harvard Business School and the University of Bombay as respects participation in ITP and other arrangements overseas such as scheduling visits by Harvard faculty members going to India, joint use of case material and course development work, etc.

There was some question in our January 1963 visit as to whether the management programs at Ahmedabad, Calcutta and Hyderabad were not going to saturate the market. The entry of the University of Bombay may be premature by a year or so in the view of some parts of our earlier discussion. (There was a thought that the three institutions might take five years to establish a market before further expansion could be successfully undertaken.) However, with the Bombay School now in being, it will probably make as great a contribution toward
increasing the market for advanced management training as it does toward expanding the
facilities available for such training. Therefore, I am not particularly worried.

[signed: Hank]
HBA: rmm
c.c. Professor Harry Hansen
December 20, 1963.

Prof. Charles D. Orth 3rd,
Alumni Program Office,
Harvard University,
Graduate School of Business Administration,
Soldiers Field,
Boston 63,
Massachusetts,
U.S.A.

Dear Charlie:

Thank you very much for your letter of December 6. I am naturally pleased that you wish to include my article, “Leadership Style as a Variable in Research Administration”, in your book. You certainly have my formal permission to use it.
This year I am doing a little study of the participants in our 8-month Junior Executive Development Program here at I.I. M.C. Mostly I am interested in learning how Indian managers approach problems, their assumptions about people, implicit values, etc. As part of this study I have had two groups write on each of two different cases. We have some dollar funds for research purposes and I am wondering if any of the case report evaluation people at H.B.S. would be interested in working with me to analyse these case protocols. The two primary questions would be: what are the general characteristics of the approach taken to each case by the combined groups, and then how do the two groups differ from each other in their approach to each case? Should some person there want to work with me on this, could you please have him (or her) correspond with me directly? We could establish some plan of compensation. It is possible that someone interested in your India program might have some intrinsic interest in this problem. Obviously, I need an independent view of these materials since I am so heavily involved with the participants in lectures and Human Relations training groups. Incidentally, from my experience with two groups here (average age 28) I am convinced that T-groups are a high priority item for Indian management education.

Best wishes for 1964!

Sincerely,

[sd: Howard]

HOWARD BAUMGARTEL

HR: ab
Letter from Harry L. Hansen to Mercer Brugler dated March 17, 1964

[In response to a letter by Mercer Brugler, Chairman of the Board, Pfaudler Permutit Inc. in Rochester N.Y. on February 5, 1964 inquiring about the potential graduates from the business management institute being set up in Ahmedabad, India due to their interest in setting up a plant for the manufacture of pharmaceutical equipment – ]

March 17, 1964

Mr. Mercer Brugler

Chairman of the Board

Pfaudler Permutit, Inc.

Rochester 3, New York

Dear Mr. Brugler:

On my return to the office today from India, I have found your letter of February 5th and my secretary’s answer of February 7th. I enclose a catalogue and a brochure about the Indian Institute which you may find of interest. It was the Program for Management Development which took me to India.

You will be interested to know that we had about 4,000 inquiries for the two-year postgraduate program which is planned to begin this summer. Out of these inquiries we had
800 men formally apply for admission and remit the necessary 10 rupees. I might add that 10 rupees in India for a young man is quite a sum. Out of 800 the Institute has selected 60, and of these, 62% have graduated in engineering or sciences. We think that the 60 are all outstanding young men.

There is one other program being started by the Institute this June, but we do not currently have a copy of the brochure announcing it. It is designed for young men who because of family affiliations find themselves in positions of major responsibility. As you know, the family concern in India is a very common thing, and we hope that we can influence and train some of these young men because they should be in positions to influence the future. I might add that we are being careful not to develop an image which indicates that we are only interested in educating the privileged classes. In this connection we are planning a series of night programs for men who will find it difficult to leave their jobs. And I might add that in the postgraduate program, we plan to offer sufficient fellowships so that this program will be filled with able people regardless of their financial resources.

I hope you find this material interesting. In March of 1966 we should have some bright and well trained Indians available for you and other business managers in India.

Sincerely yours,

HLH:bms

Enclosures – sent Indian Inst. Catalogue + Jaipur brochure
Letter from U.S. A.I.D. to Harry L. Hansen, dated 3 March 1964

United States of America

Agency for International Development

Faridkot House New Delhi -1 India

3 March 1964

Dear Professor Hansen:

This is to acknowledge the memorandum, “Subject: An Application for Financial Support from A.I.D. (PL 480) Funds for the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.”

The United States A.I.D. Mission fully recognizes the importance of improving the standards of management in India, and the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad should be able to make a major contribution to the dissemination of management knowledge and skills. It is very encouraging to know that the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration is taking such an active interest in the Project.

At this time, as you may know, we are not in a position to take any positive steps toward assisting in the funding of the construction of the Institute. The United States Mission in India is currently urging Washington to free in grant form the United States-owned PL 480 rupees which have been set aside for United States uses. In the process of making these requests, we are assembling several written project proposals which are in nature similar to the Ahmedabad Institute application; these proposals, including the Ahmedabad
memorandum, will serve to support the Mission’s own request for more flexibility in the utilization of the United States uses rupees.

We are certainly very grateful to you for helping to put into form and for sending the carefully prepared information concerning the Ahmedabad Institute. When, and if, the conditions limiting the use of these PL 480 rupees are relaxed, we will be able to proceed with the grant request. At this time we can only hope for the best.

The United States A.I.D. Mission very much appreciates your interest in our possible support of the Institute.

Sincerely yours,

[signed]

C. Tyler Wood

Minister-Director
Professor Harry L. Hansen
Director of the Division of International Activities
Harvard Business School
Morris House 14
Boston 63, Massachusetts

Dear Professor Hansen,

When I met you in Ahmedabad this summer, we briefly discussed the type of work I was doing and the benefits I saw from working in India for three months. Since we tentatively agreed that such a program was a good idea, I want to describe my summer experience to you in the hope that we may find some way of continuing and expanding this type of program.

In December of last year Rohit Desai and I began working to set up this program for this past summer. The objective of this program was similar to that of the IBC summer job program.
but with the belief that there is a more pressing need for interaction between India and the U.S. both for cultural understanding and sympathy and for the flow of advanced business information of the type we are learning at Harvard Business School. Considering India’s present key position politically and its economic problems, we felt that such interaction is vital to the future of both countries as well as beneficial.

India represents the ideal place for this extension of a program of the type presently run by the IBC. The state of business is sufficiently developed to warrant the use of more sophisticated business techniques, but, generally speaking, these do not exist. Second there is a distinct need for assistance at all levels so that the Harvard Business School student can see himself as being useful. Finally the cultural exchange and education is significant because of the vast cultural and philosophical differences which exist between Indian and Western thought.

With these objectives in mind Rohit and I wrote letters to Indian firms and business men proposing that they hire a Harvard Business School student for the summer, outlining the above objectives, stressing the cultural exchange effect and the potential for better future Indian-American relations. At the same time we stressed the benefits to the student and pointed out that there was potential business benefit to the company because of the student’s experience and training.
[Costs to the company and the opportunity cost of travel to India in terms of the loss of summer savings and travel over the summer discussed, showing that the companies were interested but the costs too high, and the high opportunity costs and out-of-pocket expenses making travel prohibitive without the reimbursement of the flight fare]

The work was much more stimulating and rewarding than any of the six previous summer jobs I have held with American firms. This firm has many problems which badly need solving for which I was sufficiently qualified by my education.

Almost as important was my experience in living with four different Indian families, an arrangement made through Rohit. In income they ranged from upper middle class to wealthy, and they provided me with an opportunity to explore the ideas and attitudes which these families held as well as providing me with the opportunity to experiment with vegetarian food for three months. Through these families I met others who introduced me to the cultural and other aspects of Indian life.

For me this has been an important experience in my life. It has given me some perspective on my role as an American and my country’s position and image in a world where it represents only 10% of the people. It has given me some of the wider experience needed to be truly well-educated. It is giving me the impetus and opportunity to rationally consider international work with developing countries as a rewarding experience.

I feel that I also was able to benefit my employer. My job was to study the flow of cloth through the finishing section of his mill and to streamline it. During the time I was there I
was able to reduce his in-process inventory by 200,000 yards and introduce an effective method for scheduling. In addition I made recommendations for several organizational changes.

He saw the extent of these problems and was sorry that I had such a short time to work in, particularly since there were all the problems associated with becoming familiar with the operations. He realized this but felt that my summer was beneficial to him and the people in his company in demonstrating new ways of thinking about these problems, as well as providing the actual solutions.

As a result of this summer’s experience Rohit and I are more firmly convinced about the merits and benefits of working for a summer in India. For people potentially interested in international work, especially with developing countries, this offers a marvelous opportunity to make a rational decision. To ask the Indian companies to support this opportunity completely is unfair to them because of the high out-of-pocket costs to the student as well as the lost savings from summer employment here, not many students could afford to bear the additional $1200 burden of an airplane ticket. Nevertheless we feel that this $1200 investment has sufficiently high returns to the person, to this country and to India to seek outside support to send several students from Harvard Business School to Indian[sic] to work for the summer.

We feel that there are probably ten well qualified Harvard Business School students whose interest in international work with developing countries would make it worthwhile to send
them to India. The total cost of doing this would be only $12,000 whereas the potential benefits far outweigh this cost.

With regard to this financing, Rohit had an idea which I will pass on. Since the purpose of this program is to produce interaction of the two cultures, it would be beneficial to have Indian students work here to be exposed to our way of doing business. Since there are large rupee balances in India with the U.S. government, we wonder whether these might not be used to finance air plane fares for Indian students here at the same time as dollar balances were used to finance air fares there.

We would appreciate any suggestions or help you could give us in this attempt to set up such a program, particularly one which would continue after Rohit and I leave this year.

Sincerely yours,

[signed]

R. Bruce Cuthbertson
Letter from Ralph W. Hidy to Harry L. Hansen dated April 22, 1964

April 22, 1964

Professor Harry L. Hansen

Harvard Business School

Dear Harry:

In answer to your letter of April 17, I can give you only general impressions. I was favorably impressed by all three men – Santhanam, Grewal, and Mehta. They are all able, alert men, sincerely desirous of making a mark in the world and of helping to give India a new place in the sun.

Of the three, however, Mr. Santhanam is outstanding, I think. He has achieved a high position in a large corporation, thereby demonstrating capacity for administration. He has a more outgoing personality than either Grewal or Mehta and would, I should think, handle social responsibilities as effectively as decision making. Moreover, he has a wife that would be of major help to him in the social area.

If Santhanam refused to consider accepting the post as director of the Institute, I would try Grewal next and Mehta third. I wish I could be more helpful to you.

Sincerely,

[signed: Ralph]
April 29, 1964

Prof. Ralph W. Hidy

Morgan 304

Dear Ralph;

Thanks very much for your opinions on Santhanam, Grewal and Mehta.

Perhaps I have mentioned to you that the Ahmedabad Institute is most anxious to do some work in the field of Indian business history. Although I have not corresponded with her directly, I gather than[sic] Henrietta Larson is most interested but not until the summer of 1965. As perhaps you know she has long had a close link with Harriet Ronkin who is in Hyderabad. I always think of her by her maiden name, although she is of course now married to Rolf Lynton. If you have any thoughts about a young person who would like to go to India to do some research in the field, please let me know. This would not interfere with Henrietta’s going; as a matter of fact, it would probably be helpful.

Sincerely yours,

HLH:bms
Letter from Maurice Zinkin to Harry L. Hansen dated 7th February 1964

Unilever Limited,
Unilever House. London. E.C. 4

7th February, 1964

Professor H. L. Hansen,

c/o Rambaugh Palace,

Jaipur,

India.

Dear Harry,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 30th January. I look forward to your further comments. What I am trying to do is to find quite short printed material which is reasonably controversial, so as to make them ask themselves what it is they, in fact, think about their environment as a preliminary to deciding what they can do about it. I think that the problem with many Indian Managers is that they have a programme of action but that it is often based on an inaccurate view of their society and particularly of village society. I think if we can get them discussing the facts of the society the questions will flow automatically. However, if you feel otherwise I would, of course, defer to your greater teaching experience.

Yours,

Maurice Zinkin

c.c. Miss Sims, Secretary to Mr. Hansen at Harvard
Partial transcript of memorandum to George P. Baker dated April 13, 1962

Recommendations: (1) With regard to an association between the Harvard Business School and the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Society; (2) With regard to the establishment of a center or institute at the School concerned with certain international research and instructional activities

1. The Ad Hoc committee on the School’s International Activities recommends to the Dean that the Faculty recommend to the Governing Boards of the University that this School undertake a program of association for five years with the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, provided the Dean be satisfied that manpower is available or foreseeable to properly discharge the school’s obligation.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee on the School’s International Activities further recommends to the Dean that he concurrently recommend to the Faculty the establishment of a center or institute to help the School to move in an evolutionary manner into a position of global comprehension and influence with regard to management concepts, policies and practices throughout the world. THE AD HOC COMMITTEE BELIEVES THAT THE SUCCESS OF BOTH THE ASSOCIATION AND THE CENTER OR INSTITUTE ARE INTERRELATED, AND AN AFFIRMATIVE VOTE FOR ONE RECOMMENDATION REQUIRES AN AFFIRMATIVE VOTE FOR THE OTHER.
“The Institute is a joint financial venture by the Government of India, the State Government of Gujarat, the Indian business community, and the Ford Foundation. The Harvard Business School will incur no financial responsibility.”

“The Immediate aim of the School’s cooperation with the Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, would be to help build a national institution for management training in India. Training emphasis would be on the post-graduate (our graduate) level, but adaptations of our training programs for businessmen would be made. Although the School’s obligation would be to the Ahmedabad Institute, this would not mean a neglect of encouragement and tangible help to universities, other institutes, and organizations in India interested in management training. In fact, the long-run aim of the School’s cooperation would be to give impetus toward the professionalizing of management in India. Consequently, a cooperative and sharing attitude among all interested organizations from the very beginning would be most important.”

“With regard to the immediate aim of the development of the Institute, the Ad Hoc Committee views the School’s obligation to consist of (1) consultation with the Indian director on the planning and development of the Institute; (2) guiding of consultation with Indian faculty coming to the Harvard Business School for study (3) consultation and guidance in India with regard to the development of case and other forms of research (4) consultation and guidance in India on course development and teaching.

The underlying premise is that is is not the School’s responsibility to develop an Institute and hand it over to the Indians, but that there is a mutual creating, developing and building of the
Institute. The exact nature of the relationship between Institute and School staff cannot be stated because it will be evolutionary in form and will depend on the particular people involved and the specific problems faced. In essence, a cooperative effort is looked forward to, one that depends upon a mutual understanding of goals and means rather than upon a predetermined and carefully calculated division of responsibilities among contractual parties.

The Ad Hoc Committee has not attempted to draw up a specific development program for the Institute. There are undoubtedly a number of different alternative programs, each attractive and workable, and the Committee believes a choice should be made by those individuals who will be immediately concerned with developing the Institute. The Committee believes that these individuals, Indians and members of this School’s staff, will naturally wish to consult with and draw upon the experience of many members of the Faculty.

The Committee, however, has of necessity had to give some thought to probable manpower commitments. It is clear that the Ford Foundation is thinking in terms of a senior man from this Faculty who would spend several years in India while the Institute was being launched. From our point of view, and indeed from the Foundation’s, it would be desirable that this man continue in a consulting relationship for perhaps a further three-year period. During this second period, he might spend several months each year in India. In addition to the senior man, two or three men at the assistant or associate professor level should be in India for two-year periods. The Foundation does not insist that all these men be currently members of this Faculty. Beyond these commitments, it may be desirable to have some research assistants or
doctoral candidates in India for two – or three-year assignments. The Ad Hoc Committee’s feeling is that these research men will be readily recruitable.

The manpower commitments sketched appear to be the maximum that the School should be prepared to meet for a five-year period. They may be less depending upon the background and the experience of the Indian staff that is recruited. Not included in these commitments are short-term assignments perhaps for occasional AMP conferences during the early years which may be scheduled during School vacation periods. These assignments do not create manpower problems.

The Ad Hoc committee expects that over a five-year period there is likely to be a flow of perhaps six to eight Indians each year to the school. The handling of these men can be varied with their backgrounds: For instance, some may participate in the International Teachers Program; some may be part of the Doctoral Program; and others may fit in the Program for Management Development. This variation in treatment is not intended to imply casualness. In fact it would be vital to assign responsibility to these men to an organized activity at the School such as the International Teachers Program, or the proposed center or institute, which is discussed in the second part of this memorandum.

Background Concerning the Harvard Business School and India

The first Indian graduate of the School’s MBA program was in the class of 1948. According to the 1959 Alumni Directory, there are 36 Indians who have participated in one of the School’s programs now living in India. According to the same source, one Indian has
attended the Middle Management Program and two the Advanced Management Program. A recent Indian AMP, Prakash L. Tandon, one of the top officials of Hindustan Lever, Ltd. Is a member of the Governing Board of the Ahmedabad Institute. Three Indian professors have participated in the International Teachers Training Program. One Indian has been a member of the School’s doctoral program and received his dictate degree here in 1957. Since 1955, eight teams consisting of 74 Indian business executives and governmental officials have visited the School under the sponsorship of the United States Government, and 93 Indians have visited the School as individuals and not as team members.

Pre-World War II

In 1938, the Office of Indian Affairs inquired as to the possibility of the School’s assistance in training men for the Indian Civil Service. The Faculty voted approval of an experiment with the provisos that: the men be acceptable to the Dean’s office, each student’s course program be worked out individually, and that second-year course elections be approved by the Dean’s office and the instructors in the course. There is no record conveniently available as to whether any Indians connected with ICS subsequently attended the School. It is perhaps incidentally worth noting that the Faculty wished the vote to apply to any men sent to the School by the Department of State.

Post-World War II period

The first event in this period of significance with regard to the School’s Indian relationships occurred in the fall of 1956{Footnote 1: It might be mentioned here that shortly after his
retirement as Dean, Donald K. David made a round-the-world trip and after visiting India remarked that four institutes were needed for business training in India. A meeting was called at the Ford Foundation offices in New York which was attended by Dean Teele and members of the School’s Faculty who had had teaching experience abroad. At this meeting, Ford’s representative in India, Douglas Ensminger, requested that a survey be made with regard to developing management training at the University of Bombay. Professors Meriam and Thurlby (of Cornell) went to India in December and subsequently prepared a report “On the Establishment of the Proposed Institute of Management Studies at the University of Bombay,” dated March 1957. This Institute was not created, however, in part because of differences of opinion which later arose in India about the status of the Institute within the University of Bombay.

A: Several Memoranda: Professor Lincoln Gordon and the Task Force Committee on International Management Training

After the Meriam–Thurlby investigation, the questions of the School’s participation in an Indian venture lay dormant until the late fall of 1957. Then Professor Gordon, in a November 25, 1957 memorandum to the Dean concerned with “Harvard Business School Activities in the International Field” made reference to India. After expressing support for an expansion of foreign teacher training from Europe and the British Commonwealth countries, Gordon suggested this approach was not likely to be effective with Asian, African and Latin American countries. For these latter countries, he suggested the most impact would come
from attempting to do a major institution-building job in a few selected locations. Two possible locations suggested were Mexico and India. With regard to these he said:

Assuming that we would not want to undertake any such project without doing it well, and that investment of these magnitudes (ed: six to eight Faculty members abroad over a five-year period, training of a similar number of foreign faculty here, advice on curriculum, administrative and other arrangements.) is required to do it well, the number of such arrangements must obviously be kept very small. In relation to basic needs and greatest opportunities for contributions to our own programs, to the service of the American business community, and to the national interest, I would suggest attempting, in the first instance, two such enterprises. One would be in Spanish-speaking Latin America, and an effort should be made to give it more than national character. Although the best location for this purpose would require careful exploration, Mexico probably offers as favorable an environment as any. The second such institution should almost certainly be in India. This would not have a more than national character (although perhaps ultimately other South and Southeast Asians might find their way there), but it would be in a country of continental dimensions whose future development is of the greatest significance. Despite the formal hostility of the government to private enterprise, there is a strong business community and the prospects for its future growth are good if the general development effort can be kept from collapsing. More and better management talent is one of the keys to this, and it is a crying need in publicly owned enterprises such as the railroads and utility systems
as well as in private business. Any such development should be build in the
University framework which offers the best prospects of its imitation elsewhere. The
most promising location for this purpose appears to be either New Delhi or Bombay.

Approximately one-and-a-half years later, May 25, 1959, an “Interim Report to PPC” by the
Task Force Committee on International Management Training (sometimes known as the
“Gordon Committee”) contained the following with regard to India:

The other major underdeveloped regions are Asia, Africa and the Near East. The
School is already involved in one substantial undertaking in the Near East. We have
given some very modest help to the new program in Ghana, but it seems clear that the
present pace of political evolution and social fermentation in tropical Africa generally
is such as to limit the opportunities for constructive, long-run educational ventures in
high level management training at the present time. In Asia, members of our Faculty
have helped to develop an effective summer program in the Philippines. We have
discussed over recent years various proposals for assistance on management training
in India. The Meriam-Thurlby report on the mission to Bombay two years ago has
apparently stimulated new thinking in India on the usefulness of case teaching for
business training. The School has offered to train four Indian case writers at the
School and at a later stage to assist in an extended case writing seminar program in
India for men from four leading Indian universities, we understand that this offer now
seems likely to be taken up.
The question still remains whether we should be prepared to assist in a more ambitious effort in India, such as the partial manning and curriculum development for some type of All-India management training institute, as has been proposed from time to time. The importance of India as the largest underdeveloped free nation and as a bellwether for other extremely poor countries anxious to improve their conditions rapidly is self-evident; the difficulties which would face this School or any American institution in helping to develop such an Indian institute are also obviously very great. The ability and willingness of the Faculty to cooperate in such an effort are uncertain. Its proper ranking in the priority scale is unclear.

This emphasis on India is not meant to exclude other possible alternatives in underdeveloped Asian countries. It would be useful to consider whether a year-round program in the Philippines might be a possible alternative, and whether a Philippine institution could be expected to attract students from other Asian countries. It may perhaps be wise, in the event that the case writing proposal for India materializes, to use that experience as a basis for examining whether a much more ambitious program would be undertaken at a later stage.

The minutes of the June 2, 1959 meeting of PPC at which the Gordon Committee’s reports were discussed contain, with regard to India, only the following:

2. The Task Force proposal recommended two major ventures in management training (Latin America and India). We should postpone action on India and use INMAN to explore the situation in Latin America{Footnote 1: INMAN (Instituto
Mexicano de Administracion de Negocios, A.C.) is an alumni-sponsored management training activity. The INMAN alternative has been quiescent at the School since 1960.

B. Andrew R. Towl, Director of Case Development, Goes to India

In the spring of 1959, John B. Fox negotiated with ICA for the assignment of Towl to India for a four-months period to work with four Indian participants in the ITP program upon their return to India. This possibility never materialized.

Somewhat less than a year later, the Ford Foundation came forward with a proposal to have a man spend a year at the Administrative Staff College at Hyderabad to advise the staff on case research and teaching, and Towl left for this purpose in the fall of 1960, returning to the School in the winter of 1962.

Towl’s participation at Hyderabad led to the development of a casebook of fifty cases written by thirteen Indians. This book is shortly to be published by the Administrative Staff College.

C. An Indian Project Appears Dubious

A “Supplementary Report to PPC”, December 9, 1959, from the Task Force Committee on International Management Training Stated; “We understand that arrangements are now being made for programs in India by the Business Schools at M.I.T. and U.C.L.A. In these circumstances, we believe that further consideration of a major HBS venture in India should now be set aside, and that we should henceforth concentrate on the Philippines as the most likely location for development of a large-scale Asian program when and if such action
becomes appropriate”{Footnote 1: On April 5, 1960, Professor Harry L. Hansen prepared a memorandum entitled “Asian Center for Management Research and Development,” proposing a Philippine-based activity. This project did not attract dollar financing and was consequently not brought to PPC attention.}


The reference to U.C.L.A. in the “Supplementary Report, etc.” introduces another sequence of events. On December 20, 1959, George W. Robbins, Associate Dean, Graduate School of Business Administration, University of California, Los Angeles, made a report, “Recommendations for an All-India Institute of Management,” as consultant to the Ford Foundation, New Delhi. One matter discussed in the Robbins Report is especially relevant, namely, the question of the Institute’s identification with a university.

The Robbins Report reviewed three possibilities of organizing the institute:

The Institute may be organized in one of three ways: (1) as a department in a university, (2) as a new autonomous creature of the State, or (3) as an autonomous society organized under the Societies’ Registration Act (XXI of 1860). The third method is recommended.

The first method would be the appropriate one because the Institute must operate as a community of scholars, drawing strength from the other scholars whose disciplines comprise the university. Unhappily, observation leads to the inescapable conclusion that the price of this membership in the scholars’ community would be too high. It
would amount to a conformance with traditional organization, government, and standards too inflexible to permit the bold, experimental approach under policies and programs dictated at once by the needs of India and the lessons of experience elsewhere.

The second method, by special act of the Parliament would have the possible advantage of empowering the Institute to grant its own degrees, but the process of enactment would likely be too slow and uncertain.

The third method has ample precedent in India and permits rapid, independent action based upon appropriate collaboration of business, government and education. While it does not insure from the outset the awarding of recognized degrees, this method provides ample compensating factors.

An Institute of Management should be organized with aims broad enough to permit development but yet clear enough to provide a guide for the growth of a post-graduate, professionally oriented center of studies.

E. A Side Comment on the Question of Postgraduate Degrees

As is indicated in the Robbins Report, the organization of the Institute as an autonomous society does not confer upon the society the right to grant degrees. The degree-granting privilege can be obtained, however, as past precedent has demonstrated when the Institute is declared by an Act of Parliament as “an institution of national importance.” The question naturally comes to mind as to when this might be done. To set down objective criteria such as
that this be done within a given number of years, or when the faculty becomes a certain size, or when the faculty numbers so many members with advanced degrees, or when the Institute has a certain number of graduates, or others, is to miss the main point which is the quality of the Institute’s work. The timing really depends upon a subjective evaluation of the existence of this quality. It is important to note that the Governing Board of the Ahmedabad Institute is on record as wanting the Institute to have degree-granting status once it demonstrates its competence to provide the kind of training all would agree as essential to the awarding of a degree. In the meantime, it is the judgment of the contracting parties, the Government of India through the Ministry of Scientific and Cultural Affairs, the Chief Minister of the State of Gujarat, the Indian business community, and the Ford Foundation that the initial absence of the degree will give the Institute an opportunity to pioneer in new fields and to develop more rapidly toward its goal of effective management training.

F. The Two All-India Institutes of Management

Concurrently the Robbins study, India’s Third Five Year Plan was being completed. The Third Five Year Plan, approved in the spring of 1961, provided for the establishment of two All-India Institutes of Management. One has been established at Calcutta and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is cooperating with it. The second is to be located at Ahmedabad, and the Harvard Business School has been asked by the Government of India and the Ford Foundation if it would work with the Institute.
Faculty Policy

Under the policy statement voted by the Faculty, “Report on the Criteria to be Applied in Connection with Faculty Participation in Outside Programs (Revision of April 11, 1956), “The Indian proposal would be a Category I program. If we consider the criteria advanced in the policy statement and apply them to the Indian project, with one exception, that of the availability of needed manpower, it would appear that these criteria are met. Of general policy interest in connection with the project are two paragraphs from this Report;

An understanding of the fundamentals of the administrative process can be greatly enlarged by acquaintance with administrative problems in different contexts. Such activity offers interested persons the opportunity to identify those aspects of administration which are common to all efforts to organize people for a complex collective task. When the program is a foreign one, it is also likely to create a more vivid understanding of the special characteristics of the American society which are relevant to business administration in this country. Improved understanding of all these kinds can be brought to bear at the Harvard Business School both on our management training and our business research activities.

On the broader front, the committee feels that the University and the School have a positive responsibility to participate in the effort to strengthen the free world through
the development of capable and socially responsible economic leadership at home and abroad. Without competent administration, efforts to improve standards of living will be only partly successful. Without social responsibility on the part of administrators, the gains of increased efficiency will not be shared fairly.

With these broad policy statements in mind, it is appropriate to state simply the benefits which can accrue from the proposed association with the Ahmedabad Institute. In the most immediate and practical sense the Indians, in great need for skilled managers, can gain from our experience in management training. In the same sense, and from our point of view, with the growing world nature of United States business, the School’s Faculty can enlarge its understanding of foreign environments and operating conditions. Few other, if any of the world’s economically underdeveloped countries provide as challenging an opportunity as does India in which to study management in an evolving industrial society. Not only is India a major country of the world, but it is industrializing by means of a planned blending of the public and private sectors of its economy. Thus both the scale and nature of the methods used invite study.

But there is more than academic interest involved. India is the world’s largest democracy: The People’s Republic of China is the world’s largest Communist country. Both are economically underdeveloped. Each has chosen different means to obtain economic growth, and there is an inevitable competition between these two powers which is being watched closely by other countries with substantial economic growth needs. If we accept the proposition that the Free World cannot afford to have India fail under a democratic system,
and this is indeed a tenable proposition, it is most important that the institutions of the Free
World, of which we are one, examine carefully their opportunities to help Indian economic
growth. If we can at this School make a contribution, it behooves us to do it for we and the
Indians are in effect today each other’s keeper.

[graphs from pages 14 and 15 omitted]

The School’s Resources

The School’s resources for undertaking this project are significant: an accumulated
experience in developing knowledge about business concepts, policies, and practices in the
United States; a Faculty of high quality and experience with a growing number of men with
overseas research and teaching experience; a worldwide network of alumni of the School,
foreign teacher who have studied here, and businessmen, educators and governmental
officials who have knowledge of the School’s work; and an innovative record in dealing with
management training abroad.

In addition, the School is well located with regard to other centers of international activities
such as at Harvard, the Center for International Affairs, the Center for Middle Eastern
Studies, the East Asian Research Center, and the Committee on Inter-American Affairs; at
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Center for International Studies; and at Boston
University, the African Studies Program. There is little question that a center or institute at
the Harvard Business School concerned with management studies would benefit greatly from
the broad economic, political, and cultural approaches of these Centers.

With particular reference to Harvard University, shortly after World War II, the School began to develop a relationship with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies with members of our Faculty contributing their services to the committee of this Center. Somewhat similar relations have existed from time to time with the East Asian Research Center, and more recently we have participated with the Center for International Affairs and the Committee on Inter-American Affairs. But the full benefits that could be derived from such relationships have not been obtained because we lacked an organization that could draw on these Centers for instructional purposes, research guidance, and advice flowing from their knowledge of historical, cultural and political areas.

There is the possibility that the opportunity for these Centers to make an extraordinary intellectual contribution could be enhanced by facilitating their communication through the proposed center or institute with key decision-makers, men in public and private firms throughout the world. A university is dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the development of new knowledge, and the responsibility, perhaps in the case of Harvard, is one of helping preserve not only our national heritage but also our Western heritage. Through its professional schools, in particular this School which is concerned with the development of men of affairs or practitioners, the University can pass on its findings in a new channel to men whose decisions affect the direction of many lives.

Other Relationships
There are two other potential kinds of linkage, one to other business schools in the United States and the other to organizations and institutions abroad. These relationships should be viewed as mutually supportive, evolutionary in form, not all of the same nature, composing a worldwide intelligence system on management, and in the end aimed at developing and perfecting the center’s or institute’s mission.

Three Phases in the School’s Development

The proposed center or institute can be thought of as the third phase of the School’s development in its international research and training activities. The need for the step can be shown by a brief retracing of certain of the School’s activities.

First Phase

The first phase of the School’s activities involved the admission of foreign students and the development of courses in the curriculum.

During this period, the orientation of the United States firm was primarily toward the domestic market. The typical European businessman was little interested in the development of administrative skills by methods other than apprenticeship on the job. His firm’s markets were small, family ownership and control was common, and tradition played an important part in decision-making. The countries of Asia and Africa were primarily suppliers of raw materials to the West, and the merchant, often an unpopular figure, dominated the local business scene; Central and South America and Mexico were still remote lands concerning which the average American had rather stereotyped views.
Students and Alumni

Foreign students have been enrolled in the School since its first class in 1908. Until World War II, foreign students represented 2% to 3% of total enrollment. After World War II, School policy has restricted foreign students to about 8% of each entering MBA class or 50 men. During the 1946-1959 period, about 800 foreign students from 69 countries have attended the School. Currently 15 men from nine countries are enrolled in the doctoral program. In the three remaining programs, foreign enrollment during the postwar period has been of the following proportions:

[table omitted]

Curriculum

Courses have been offered in the international area at the School since the first year of instruction in 1908-1909. From 1914-1915 until 1941-1942, Foreign Trade, or Foreign Trade and International Commercial Relations as it came to be known in the early 1930’s, was one of the dozen or so separate areas of concentration in which an individual student could specialize. This area for some time consisted of from three to six courses with strong emphasis on importing and exporting and international economics. In recent years the emphasis in the courses has shifted from greater attention on international investment and economic development, on strategies for international business operations, and on organizing
and conducting internationally decentralized operations. The three second-year courses currently being offered show increased student interest in the area.

Second Phase

The second phase involved a set of loosely coordinated activities beginning roughly in the mid-1950’s. These activities involved the establishing of an Office of Overseas Relations to handle foreign visitors, the development of an International Teachers Program, Faculty going abroad to teach, a rise of student interest in international activities, and the sending of a research group to the Philippines.

During this phase, Europe was engaged in a 20th century managerial revolution. The new and larger countries of Asia and the Far East were seeking rapid industrialization. Japan was not only recovering rapidly from the war, but Japanese businessmen today are opening department stores in the United States. The grave problems of South America were becoming apparent, and these recently have stirred our government to a major aid program. As for the United States itself, a great flow of investment abroad was developing, and an associated interest in the problems of the multinational corporation was growing.

Office of Overseas Relations
This Office was created in 1955 to provide a central place for handling the many requests for educational assistance that were coming from abroad. These requests involved questions of curriculum, suggestions on reading lists, and requests for Faculty services abroad. In addition to providing assistance for overseas institutions, the Office arranges for visits to the School of the American Universities Field Staff, counsels foreign students at the School, and makes arrangements for foreign visitors.

The number of foreign visitors to the School illustrates the great interest abroad in management development and training and the regard that is held for the School in foreign countries as a source of information. During the period January 1, 1955 to July 1, 1961, the School’s Office of Overseas Relations was host to over 4,100 visitors from abroad: businessmen, educators, and government officials. Of these, over 2,300 representing 81 countries came as individuals to see, inquire, and talk about management training. The remaining 1,800 came as members of 154 teams, typically under government sponsorship, from 28 countries. As a result of these visits and in addition because of many written inquiries, the Office of Overseas Relations maintains a steady stream of overseas correspondence with regard to management training.

International Teachers Program

The immediate origin of the International Teachers Program can be traced back to the 1945-1950 period when visits of foreign educators to the School led to a small number of Faculty people from overseas spending time at the School as observers. Exploration in Europe during 1955 by several members of the School’s Faculty led to the sending of two groups of
European professors to the School in 1956-1957. In 1958 a formalized activity, the International Teachers Program, was started.

In the period of organized activity from January 1956 through June 1961, 115 men from 61 foreign universities, institutes, and a few governmental agencies and business firms have studied at the School from periods of several months to a full academic year. Forty-four of these men were at the School in the years 1956-1957 before the initiation of the International Teachers Program, and the remaining 71 men participated in the program during 1958-1961. At present there are 15 teachers in the Program. The geographical distribution of the total 130 men is as follows: [chart omitted]