

## Literature Review

The higher education system has traditionally underserved the nonmajority student pool, that is, minorities and lower-income students (Wolainin 2003). Cultural barriers, academic barriers, financial barriers, capacity barriers, quality barriers, and institutional barriers have been some of the major factors underlying this opportunity gap.

**Cultural barriers.** These barriers refer to social attitudes and perceptions that undermine the motivation of low-income and minority students in benefiting from the opportunities for higher business education (Wolainin 2003). For example, in the low gender-egalitarian communities, female children receive less active encouragement than male children to pursue business education (House et al. 2004). Similarly, in the high power-distance communities, underprivileged students and their parents may lack understanding of the factors critical to gaining access to and being successful in higher business education (Wolainin 2003). The U.S. data show that several forces multiply cultural barriers. First, low family income: only 21 percent of college qualified low-income high school graduates, compared with more than 60 percent of the high-income college-qualified high school graduates, complete a bachelor's degree (ACSEFA 2002). Second, first-generation students (students who are first in their family to attend college) are less academically prepared to go to college, take fewer college preparatory courses, and fail to take college entrance exams (Wolainin 2003). As a result of the regulatory-driven outreach programs, first-generation students now comprise 40 percent of all undergraduate students on U.S. college campuses (Wolainin 2003).

**Academic barriers.** Research shows that students from low-income families and minority students have lower academic performance and grades than other students (Fitzgerald and Delaney 2002). Inadequate academic preparation is a major impediment to access to higher education. More than 70 percent of the population of India lives in rural areas (World Bank 1997). However, fewer than 5 percent of high school teachers are from rural areas. Such a system fails to provide role models for minority students, and, at the same time, does not offer majority students exposure to teachers who represent the country's diversity and changing economic landscape.

**Financial barriers.** Many students who are motivated and informed about their higher education options and have adequate academic preparation for higher education may not be able to afford to pay for it. Supporting the enrollment of qualified individuals who would not otherwise attend a higher education institution generates public benefits, such as higher productivity and growth, and a more just and fair society. Thus, there is a basis for public support of higher education. Research shows that grant aid is particularly

# Governance of Publicly Funded Business Schools

## The Current Debate in India

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Over recent years, there has been an increasing demand for accountability from management education programs responding, in part, to an evolving "risk society" with its lack of trust (Trow 1998). Hedmo, Sahlin-Andersson, and Wédlin (2001) use the term "regulatory field" to characterize the dynamics of the evolving regulations. A field is held together by the "common belief" (Bourdieu 1977) in certain strategic intents, such as offering appropriate and relevant management education, though the individual actors in the field may differ in their views on how those strategic intents should be pursued and perused. The interactive relationships in a field serve to generate conformity to the shared strategic intent by assuring transparency (access to all essential information), openness (nondiscriminatory participation by all constituencies), impartiality (no privilege to one party), relevance (reflective of market and regulatory needs), and coherence (aligning conflicting contexts, perspectives, purposes, and actions). The regulatory actors emphasize a "mission" that should define management education based on the interests of their constituencies, from whom they derive legitimacy and who are the key consumers of their regulatory activities. Indeed, mission-based operation is now the fundamental element for the accountability of business programs (AACSB 2003).

In this article, we identify the areas where the regulatory field has influenced the development of academic institutions' missions by alleviating various kinds of academic barriers. Thereafter, we look at the currently debated issues of business school accountability in India.