

Market Intelligence

Indian Women Pursuing Graduate Business Degrees Domestically and Abroad

Women's literacy and education in India is a progressive theme pursued and encouraged since the Vedic Period (1500 BC–600BC). The SNDT Women's University, started in British India in 1916, became the first women's university in Southeast Asia. In independent India, the XLRI School of Management, the fourth oldest business school in the world, was started in 1949.

Fast-forward to the present day: with 2.34 million graduate management education (GME) degree holders, India has the world's second-largest business graduate pool in the world. While some private business schools in India have breached the 50 percent gender parity threshold, like S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research (SPJIMR) and NMIMS University, as well as FMS Delhi as a public institution, overall the country's gender ratio at business schools is below

the current global benchmark of 41 percent female students. How can this be achieved? What inroads can be forged to improve female students' representation in GME schools?

Blending GMAT™ exam data with data from the **GMAC Prospective Students Survey**, this research brief is designed to offer data-driven insights into some critical contextual issues and concerns, provide useful information about the student profile, demographics, interests, course and majors' preferences, post-GME career preferences, and other touchpoints of female Indian business school candidates.

Importantly, this brief incorporates information on Indian women seeking GME domestically as well as internationally and draws comparisons between these two groupings throughout.

1 "Vedic period," New World Encyclopedia, https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Vedic_Period

2 International Journal of Science, Engineering and Management (IJSEM) Vol 5, Issue 10, October 2020, Women's Education in Ancient Indian Religious Texts, https://www.technoarete.org/common_abstract/pdf/IJSEM/v7/i10/Ext_96835.pdf

3 About us, SNDT University, <https://sndt.ac.in/about-us#:~:text=SNDT%20Women's%20University%20is%20the,in%201921%20from%20this%20University.>

4 "Harvard to XLRI: Four oldest B-schools in the world," The Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/harvard-to-xlri-four-oldest-b-schools-in-the-world/articleshow/47025829.cms>

5 "India has second-largest pool of MBAs in the world," The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-has-second-largest-pool-of-mbas-in-the-world/articleshow/87343544.cms>

6 Cetking, <https://cetking.com/gender/>

7 "Top non-IIM business schools improve gender diversity," The Economic Times. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/top-non-iim-business-schools-improve-gender-diversity/articleshow/84815491.cms>

8 <https://www.businessbecause.com/news/mba-degree/7921/women-mba-enrollment-record-high#:~:text=As%20of%202021%2C%20about%2041,2%25%20higher%20than%20in%202020.>

Profile of Indian Women Candidates

This section explores the demographic characteristics of female Indian citizen unique GMAT score senders and offers insights into the trends of scores sent to domestic and international schools.

Looking first at age, the data demonstrates that age 30 is a distinct threshold, with under-30 candidates making up the lion's share of unique score senders. Eighty-nine percent of candidates from this cohort sent their unique scores to domestic schools, while 91 percent sent them to international schools (**Figure 1**).

In comparison, the older than 30 age cohort languishes, with just 11 percent of students sending their unique scores to domestic schools, and 9 percent to international schools. In contrast to Indian men, Indian women older than 30 years are less likely to send their scores to international schools (9% Indian women vs. 15% Indian men). Similarly, more Indian men send their scores domestically, too, as 17 percent of Indian men older than 30 years of age send their scores domestically. Globally, women above 30 years make up an equally small portion of GME score senders: 10 percent of women globally are sending their scores to international schools, and 11 percent are sending their scores to domestic schools.

Possible reasons for this lower turnout among women over the age of 30:

- With the average age of marriage for women in India being 22.1 years⁹, they are often married, and societal constructs dictate that they more often shoulder the burden of domestic responsibilities.¹⁰
- Family planning. With women globally having their first child by or around 30 years of age¹¹, Indian women in this cohort could be prioritizing raising children over higher studies.
- They have an upwardly mobile career.
- Perpetually short of time and perhaps even monetary resources.
- Active social life and social commitments.
- Some may already hold a GME degree.

Due to these reasons, working women from the older than 30 age group may be unsure if they can take on the additional burden of pursuing GME study.

Sixty-one percent of candidates who completed their undergraduate or university degrees sent their unique scores to domestic schools, while 59 percent sent them to international schools (**Figure 2**). This finding, when juxtaposed with the previous one that around 90 percent of unique score senders to Indian business schools are in the under-30 age group, makes it clear that the vast majority of women GME aspirants in India tend to be of a young demographic.

Overall, 52 percent of unique score senders have 1-9 years of work experience, while 44 percent have less than one year's experience (**Figure 3**). These candidates are in the early to mid-career range, which again correlates with earlier findings that the under-30 candidates are the primary unique score senders; this in turn indicates that they possess marginal or no work experience

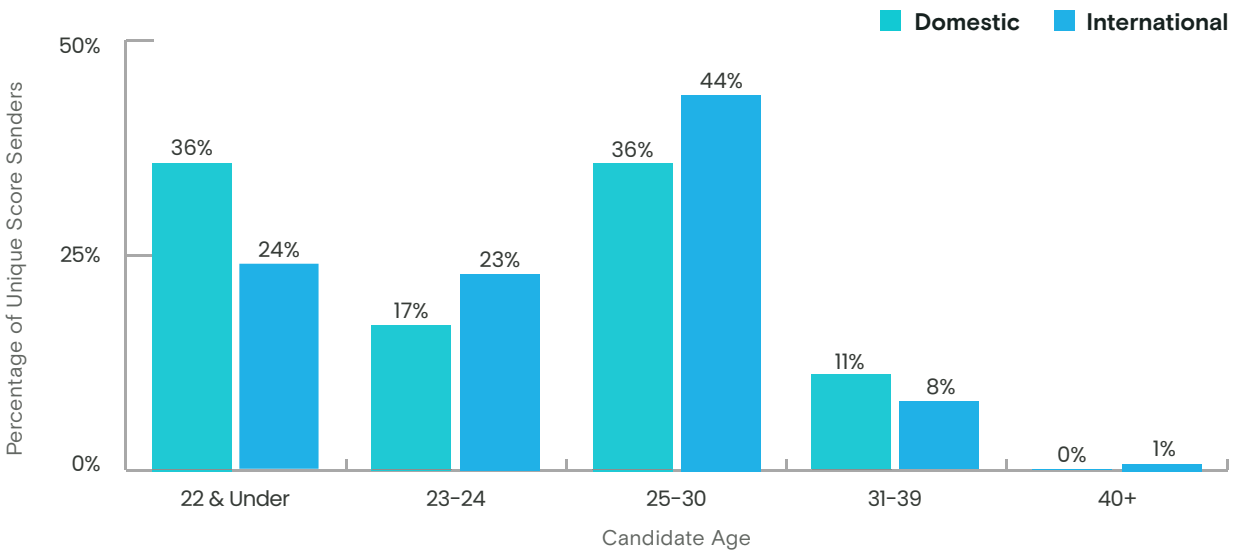
9 The Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-editorials/law-wont-cut-it-raising-womens-legal-marriage-age-to-21-is-well-intentioned-but-it-will-have-little-impact/>

10 The Indian Express, <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/feelings/marriage-post-marriage-blues-relationship-conflicts-great-indian-kitchen-film-7170075/#:~:text=Even%20if%20the%20wife%20is,of%20the%20house%20and%20children>

11 Photius, https://photius.com/rankings/2020/population/mothers_mean_age_at_first_birth_2020_0.html

Figure 1: Age Range of GMAT Score Senders

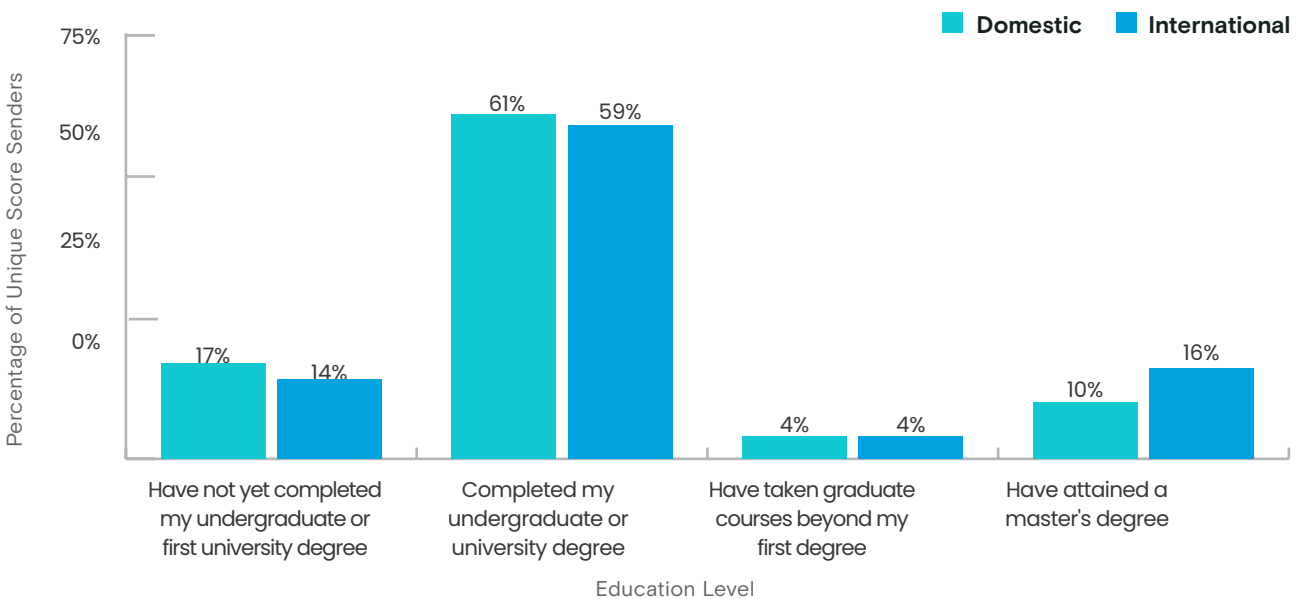
Indian citizen women, those who sent scores domestically vs. internationally, testing year 2022



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2022). GMAT Testing Data.

Figure 2: Education Level of GMAT Score Senders

Indian citizen women, those who sent scores domestically vs. internationally, testing year 2022



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2022). GMAT Testing Data.

The number of unique score senders to domestic schools remained steady at 15 percent in 2018 and 2019, increased marginally to 17 percent in 2020, and further increased to 24 percent in 2021, before decreasing to 19 percent in 2022 (**Figure 4**). In comparison, the number of unique score senders to international schools remained consistent at 85 percent in 2018 and 2019, dipped by 2 percent in 2020, and dropped significantly to 76 percent in 2021, before returning to a more standard level of 81 percent in 2022.

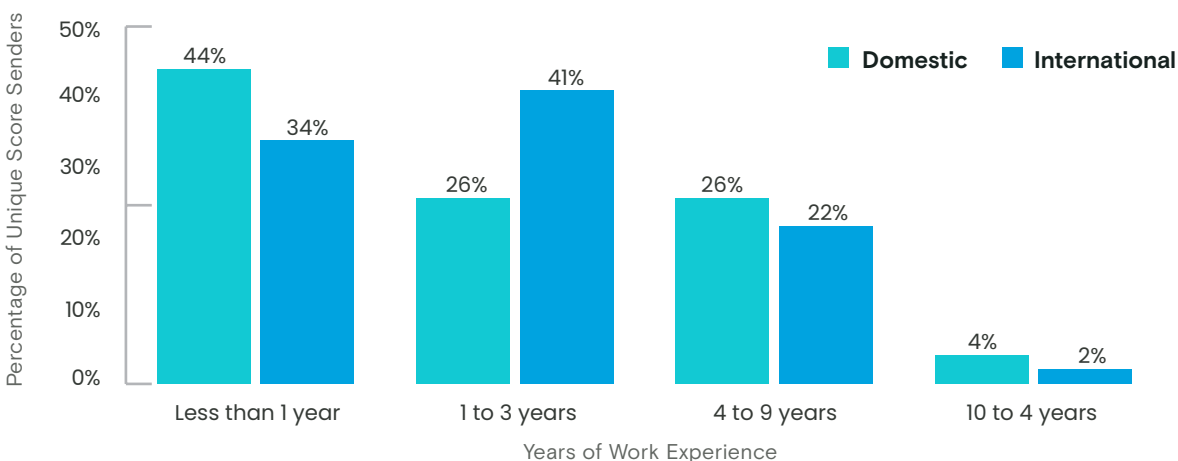
This trend has a very close relationship with the progression of the pandemic – the onset of the pandemic in late 2019, its emergence and the peaking of the first wave in 2020, the devastating second wave in 2021, and the gradual decline in 2022. Students preferred to stay closer to home during the heydays of the pandemic. However, they are increasingly preferring international study destinations as the world emerges from the pandemic.

Putting the data in a comparative context, the domestic category languished behind the international category throughout the surveyed timeline.

In terms of the socio-economic status of prospective students in the domestic category, the “slightly more income” and “about the same income” groups, take up the majority of responses – 56 percent, at 24 percent and 32 percent respectively (**Figure 5**). This is also the case in the international category, with a composite of 52 percent between the two options. The bulk of India’s unique score senders for GME study reside in the upper-middle class socio-economic strata (Rupees 500,000 to Rupees one million annual earning).

Figure 3: Years of Work Experience of GMAT Score Senders

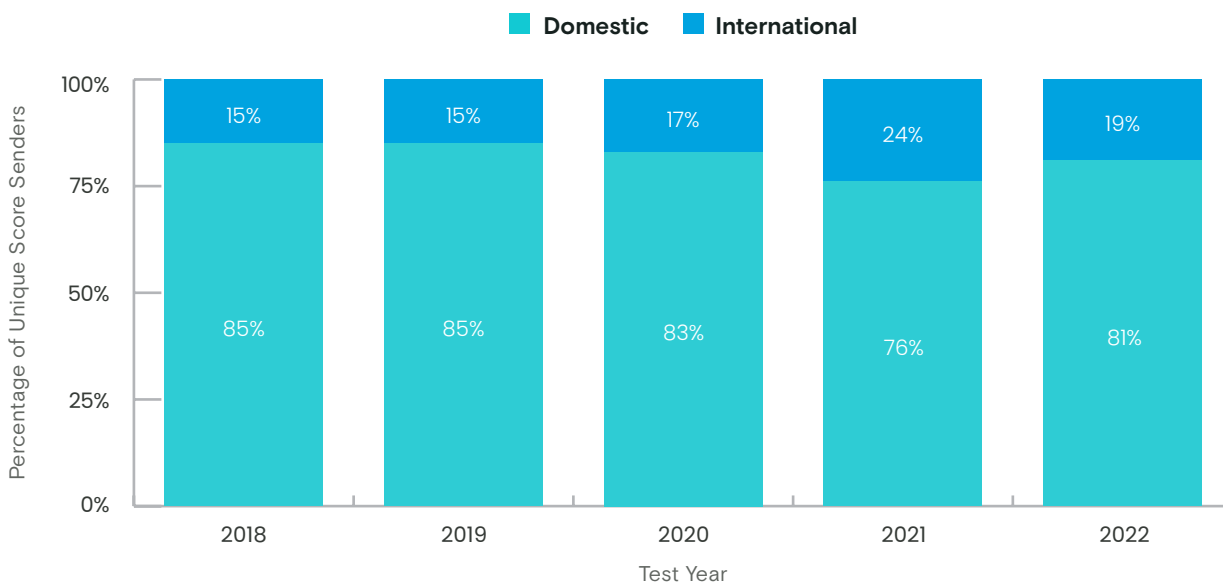
Indian citizen women, those who sent scores domestically vs. internationally, testing year 2022



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2022). GMAT Testing Data.

Figure 4: GMAT Score Sending

Indian citizen women sending scores domestically vs. internationally, testing years 2018–2022



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2018–2022). GMAT Testing data.

Figure 5: Socio-Economic Status of Prospective Students

Indian citizen women, those who prefer domestic vs. international studies, 2021

	Domestic	International
Significantly more income	4%	4%
More income	8%	16%
Slightly more income	24%	23%
About the same income	32%	29%
Slightly less income	9%	10%
Less income	5%	8%
Significantly less income	4%	2%
Prefer not to answer	13%	8%

Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2021). GMAC Prospective Students Survey.

What They've Studied Already, and What They Want to Study in A Business School

For both domestic and international schools, Indian women who sent their GMAT scores indicated business/commerce, engineering, and computer science as their top choices for undergraduate majors. (Figure 6).

However, post-admission, what do Indian women aspire to study? For domestic schools, the subjects they indicate as “must-haves” are project management (63%), leadership/change management (60%), general management (55%), marketing and communications (55%), and strategy (54%) (Figure 7). For international schools, the top cited subjects are strategy (67%), international management/business (66%), leadership change management (65%), business analytics/data science (60%), and marketing and communications (56%) (Figure 8).

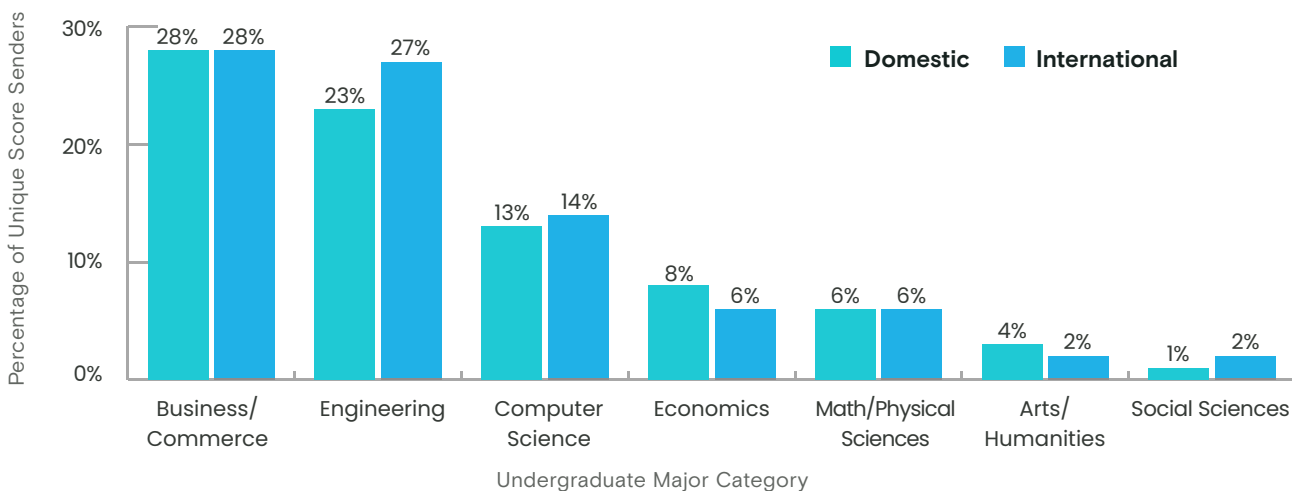
It is noteworthy that none of the emerging specializations in India such as communication management, fashion and luxury brand

management, agri-business management, sustainable development management, supply chain management, or aviation management¹³ are in the “must-have” list for most domestic female candidates. This is also true of international candidates, whose “must-have” list bypasses parallel curricula such as accounting, healthcare management, human resource management, and more,¹⁴ and includes mainly mainstream specializations (Figure 8).

Hence, Indian women GME aspirants are more likely to be risk-averse and opt for proven, in-demand options, whether at home or abroad. This finding seems to align with the previous one, that this segment of students prefers more established undergraduate majors.

Figure 6: Years of Work Experience of GMAT Score Senders

Indian citizen women, those who sent scores domestically vs. internationally, testing year 2022



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2022). GMAT Testing Data.

¹³ <https://www.mindler.com/blog/upcoming-mba-specialisations-in-india/>

¹⁴ <https://www.bridgeport.edu/news/seven-mba-specializations/>

Figure 7: Preferred GME Curriculum

Indian women prospective students who prefer to study domestically, 2021

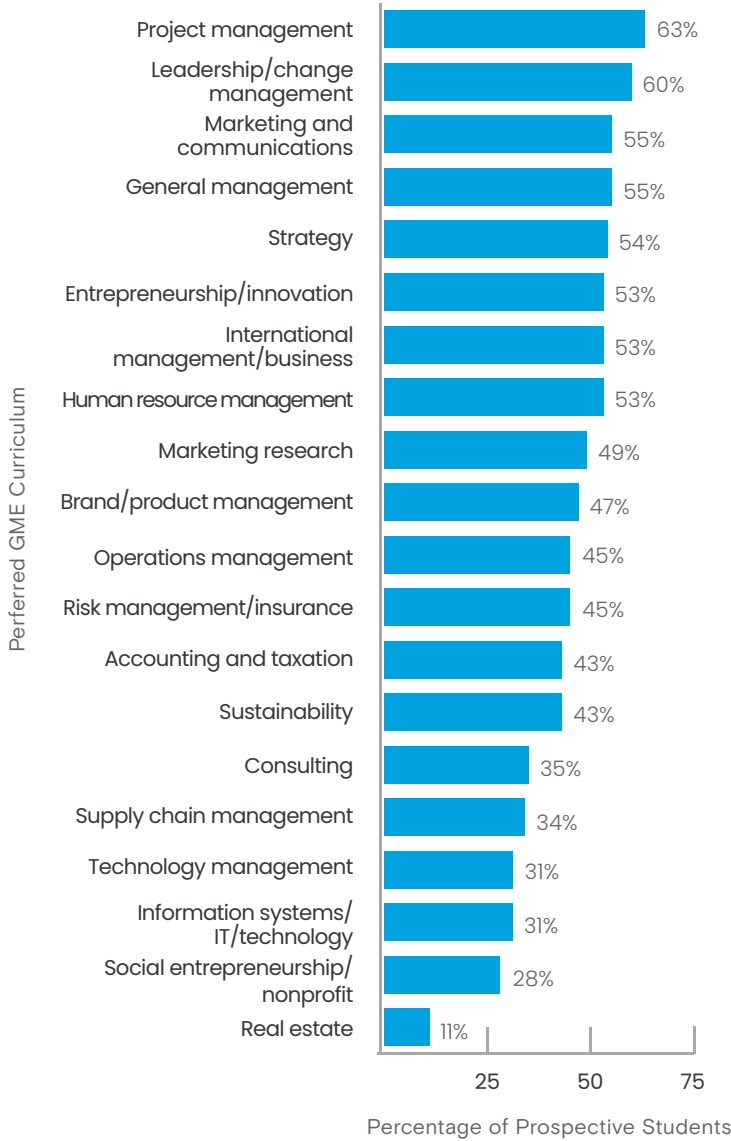
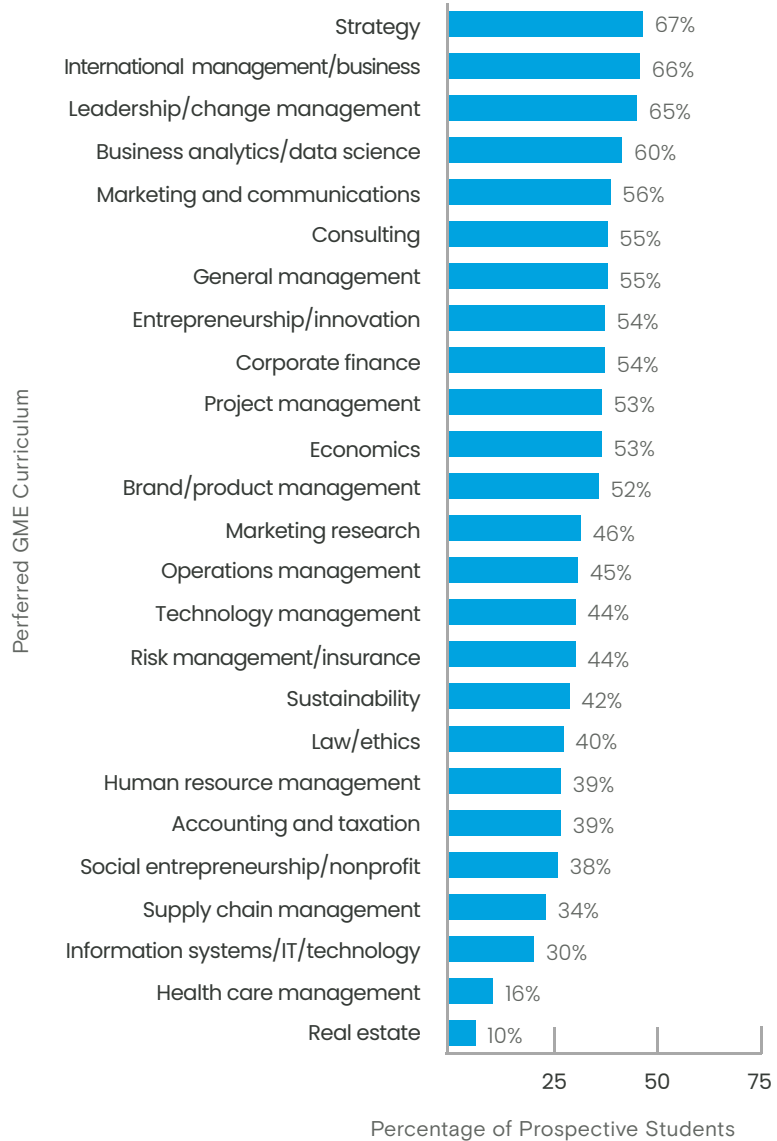


Figure 8: Preferred GME Curriculum

Indian women prospective students who prefer to study internationally, 2021



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2022). GMAT Testing Data.

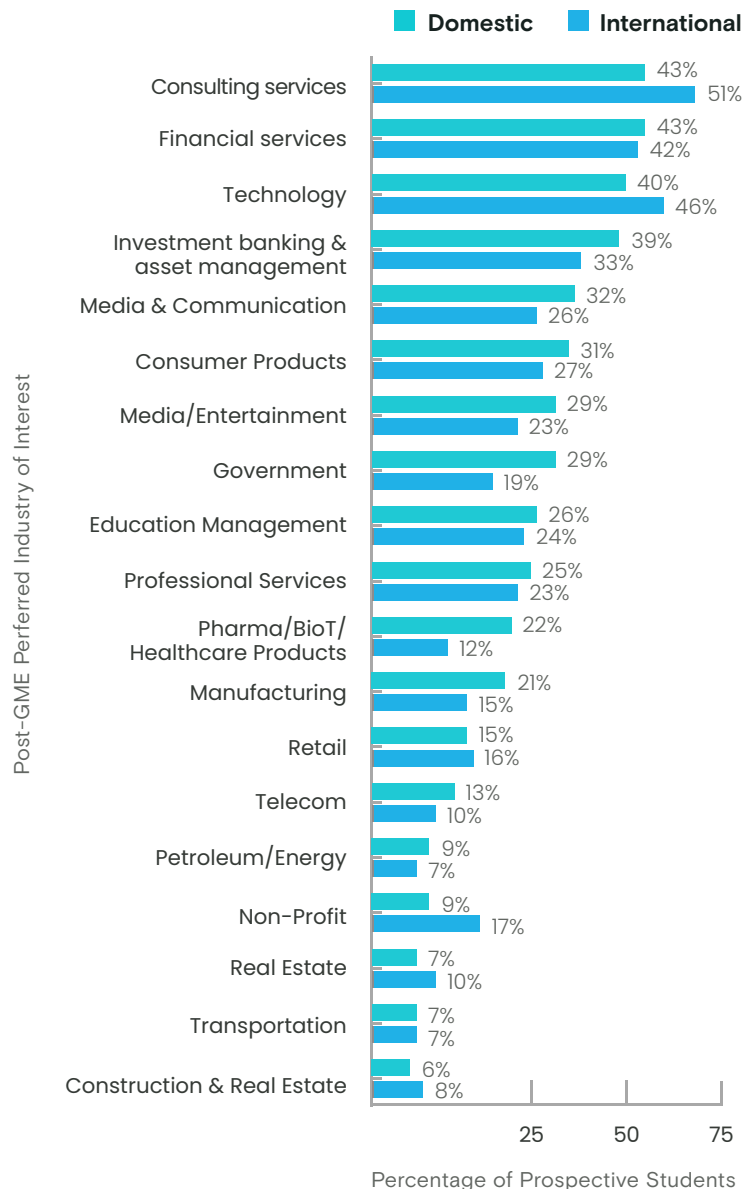
Where They Want to Take Their Careers

To get insights into the post-GME aspirations of this cohort, two sets of analyses are presented here, in a comparative format of domestic versus international categories. These are preferred industry of employment and preferred job functions.

Industry preferences show no major gaps between the two groups. From the most preferred consulting industry (43% by domestic and 51% by international categories), to the least preferred construction and real estate industry (6% by domestic and 8% by international categories), the decline is spread evenly across nineteen industries, without sudden, drastic drops anywhere on the path (Figure 9).

Although currently, the respondents demonstrate a play-safe attitude by giving more preference to mainstream career prospects, emerging industries are very much on their minds - either as their plan B or in their considerations for their next career move. Schools would do well to be future-ready and begin adding more programs and curricula that could lead to wider post-GME career choices for Indian women prospects. The MBA program in energy and environment by the Symbiosis Institute of International Management,¹⁵ IIM Ahmedabad's food and agri-business management,¹⁶ and MBA in textile management by the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International School of Textiles and Management (SVPISTM)¹⁷ are a few examples of this kind of GME program diversity.

Figure 9: Post-GME preferred industries
Indian women prospective students who prefer to study domestically vs. internationally, 2021



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2021). GMAC Prospective Students Survey.

15 https://www.sii.ac.in/site/admission/admissionoverview?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=Search&utm_campaign=SIIB_GSN_E&gclid=CjwKCAjwsfuYBhAZEiwA5a6CDNiOkslcUlctefMvENp9tXr7bu08Dsjk6TzayGv75sKMBIZjjhr_yBoCvYwQAvD_BwE

16 <https://www.iima.ac.in/web/pgp-fabm/>

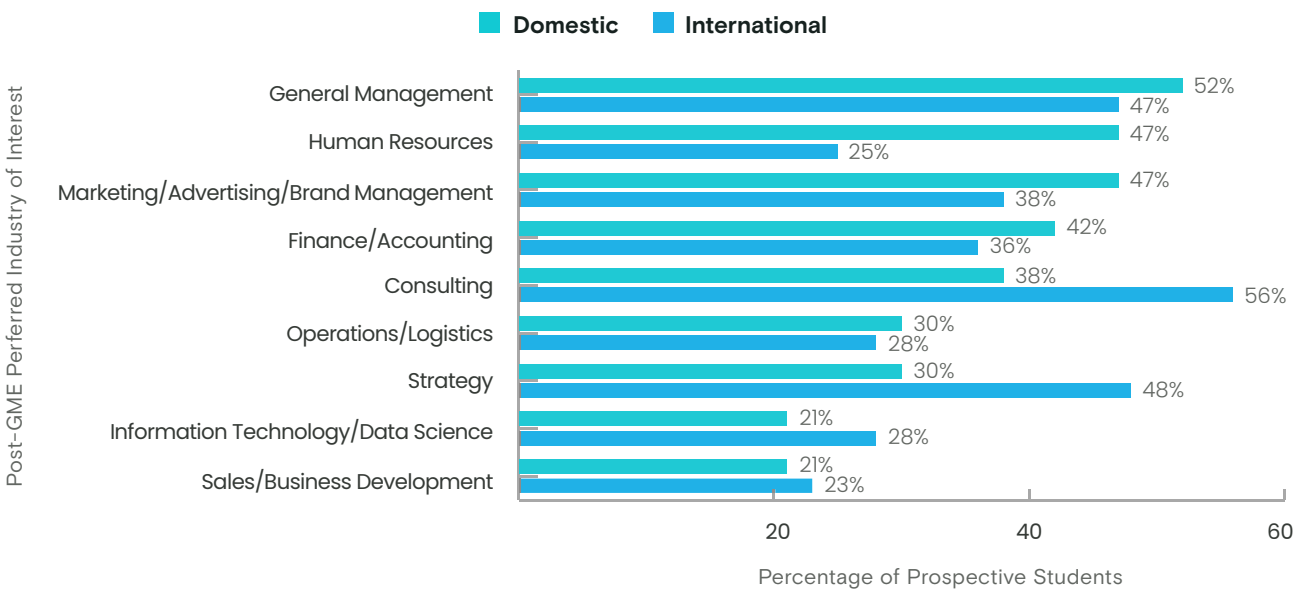
17 <https://www.careers360.com/colleges/sardar-vallabhbhai-patel-international-school-of-textile-management-coimbatore/mba-textile-management-course>

In Figure 9, we see domestic and international categories showing similar interests. Excepting the non-profit sector where the gap between domestic and international respondents is significant (around 50%, at 9% for the domestic and 17% for the international cohorts), there is no major decoupling of these two on their X-axis journey. The indication is that at graduation, Indian women would not discriminate much between domestic and international work locations. Rather, their focus would be on getting a job in their industry of choice, rather than the geographic location of that job. The takeaway for schools again is to broaden their offerings of major subjects, so students could graduate with more specializations and serve more industries, or alternatively, to

introduce niche electives which students can use to add supplemental value to their CVs. The Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore¹⁸ has taken the electives route to make its industry offerings more versatile. Their list of electives includes innovative, emerging, and outlying themes such as decision sciences, public policy, regional business development plans for diverse geographies such as Dubai, Singapore, and Indonesia, and even electives with a spiritual/cultural slant such as spirituality and self-development or management paradigms from the Bhagavad Gita (a 700-verse Hindu scripture with numerous takeaways for modern management, adopted by several successful business leaders).

Figure 10: Post-GME preferred job functions

Indian women prospective students, who prefer to study domestically vs. internationally, 2021



Source: Graduate Management Admission Council (2021). GMAC Prospective Students Survey.

18 <https://www.iimb.ac.in/programmes/pgp/pgp-elective-courses>

The top choices of post-matriculation job functions in the domestic category are general management (52%), human resource management (47%), marketing/advertising/brand management (47%), finance/accounting (42%), and consulting (38%). In the international category, consulting is at the top (56%), followed by strategy (48%), general management (47%), marketing/advertising/brand management (38%), and finance/accounting (36%; **Figure 10**).

Observations derived from this data:

- The job function that is only the fifth-most popular in the domestic category (consulting) is the most popular in the international category.
- Strategy is absent in the top-5 bracket of the domestic category, while it holds the second spot in the international category. Similarly, human resource management is missing from the international category's top 5, but it occupies second place in the domestic category.
- Interestingly, information technology/data science languishes as the second-least preference for both categories.
- Overall, the domestic segment, with general management and human resource management as the top two choices, indicates a more "generalist" job function profile. The international segment, with consulting and strategy as the top two choices, indicates a more "professional services" type of profile.

Despite women accounting for 34 percent of the aggregate IT workforce in India, and the country achieving gender parity in STEM graduates,¹⁹ female Indian GME aspirants gave information technology/data science a thumbs-down as a preferred post-GME job function in 2021. This is true for both the

domestic and international segments, indicating that the trend is fully inclusive. These facts, when juxtaposed, make it clear that information technology/data science as a subject has different perceptions. One is as pure technology – as a STEM component – and the other is as a technology management subject, in the context of GME study. Business schools can innovate their curricula by more directly marrying technology with management, which would in turn produce a hybrid generation of technocrat managers or managing technocrats. As the World Economic Forum noted in a 2019 leadership article,²⁰ these are the "data-driven decisives" and "disruption drivers" who will lead the Industry 4.0 revolution by "overcoming challenges by taking methodical, data-focused approaches to strategic decision-making."

With a fusion of technology and management, schools can prepare a new generation of capable Indian women GME graduates. There are precedents that business schools could explore to evolve their tech MBA and other curricula. The Foster Business School, University of Washington, sent a phenomenal 60 percent of graduates to the tech industry as early as 2018²¹ through its technology management MBA program. Likewise, the Stanford GSB sent 24 percent of its 2019 class²² to technological work destinations, with high median salaries and bonuses of US\$125,000 and US\$25,000, respectively.

As for the generalist and specialist job function profiles mentioned above, domestic and international schools can supplement and complement their programs by gap-filling – the generalist, by strengthening their professional services subjects (consulting and strategy) curricula, and the specialist, by reinforcing their generalist (general management and human resource management) curricula.

19 <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/more-women-in-it-cos-now-work-on-their-growth/articleshow/81195724.cms>

20 <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/these-four-leadership-styles-are-key-to-success-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>

21 <https://e-gmat.com/blogs/best-tech-mba-programs/#best-tech-mba-foster-school-of-business>

22 <https://e-gmat.com/blogs/best-tech-mba-programs/#best-tech-mba-stanford-gsb>



Recommendations for Indian Institutions

Thoughtful design choices can help make Indian business school campuses safe spaces for women

Prerna Gupta, MBA student at IBS Hyderabad nails it by saying, “perhaps the best way to improve women’s representation in business schools is to offer them a level playing field, in every context.” This includes ensuring a level playing field in the overall campus environment.

Toward this end safety, security, hygiene, recreation, comfort, amiable classroom environments, and above all, respect and equality top the list. Well-equipped and hygienic toilets, marked recreation and activity areas, a zero-tolerance policy against eve-teasing or other forms of women’s harassment including sexual harassment, offering female students equal roles in student bodies, and more, are examples of how to further improve campuses for gender inclusion.

A positive step in this direction is the UN Women’s global initiative “Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls”²³, which is aimed at developing solutions to prevent women’s sexual harassment in public spaces. The program is active in fifty cities across the world, including New Delhi. The Pixel Project²⁴ is a similar effort, which lists preventive and reactive ways in which universities and colleges can address violence against women students. Actionable steps include measures such as rigorous pre-hiring screening of faculty and staff for any history of abuse against women, students’ empowerment on campuses through women’s week and creation of women’s clubs and groups, hiring women’s escorts for travel around campus, and even offering bonus credits to

women students attending classes, seminars, and workshops on gender equality, consent, and the like. To give legal teeth to this cause, schools can either hire legal experts or create in-house legal cells to address bullying and women’s harassment cases. In India, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplaces Act 2013²⁵ is a landmark legal instrument toward this end.

Woman-friendly campuses have both overt and subtle impacts on prospective students’ study destinations. A campus is a student’s second home, and women students often want nothing more than to feel safe, secure, respected, listened to, and taken care of on school campuses.

Enhance women-centered networking and recruitment

No one understands a woman’s concerns better than a woman. From peer groups to alum networks, offering communication channels where women students can freely express and exchange their concerns makes life easier on campuses. The Women Student Association at the Harvard Business School hosted a virtual women’s visit for prospective students to offer women-centered program orientation. More is possible with a creative problem-solving approach.²⁶

The GMAC Application Trend Survey further supported this, showing that 58 percent of full-time MBA programs have custom recruitment initiatives designed for women.²⁷ These initiatives create win-win scenarios for the applicants, recruiters, and schools, the survey noted. For women applicants, beyond simply offering one-off networking opportunities with illustrious alum and

23 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

24 <https://www.thepixelproject.net/2019/11/26/16-ways-that-universities-and-colleges-can-prevent-violence-against-women-and-support-survivors>

25

26 Best business schools for 2021, <https://e-gmat.com/blogs/best-business-schools-for-women/>

27 Best business schools for 2021, <https://e-gmat.com/blogs/best-business-schools-for-women/>

other stakeholders in the recruitment funnel, such events create by-women, for-women, and of-women holistic ecosystems. Candidates feel that such openness works in their favor and inspires them to ask questions that they would refrain from voicing in a mixed, men-women environment. For recruiters, such events offer opportunities to pitch finely tapered gender-agnostic pitches that have at their center equal opportunity, respect, and the recognition of deserving talent. Companies who hire on the basis of such policies build sustainable reputations as truly inclusive employers. For schools, facilitating a level playing field where women candidates and hirers meet as equals attracts more respect and better enrolment of women students.

In India, thoughtful measures such as facilitating on-site counselors for women candidates to address their anxieties, special dressing areas, or even day-care for young mothers can go a long way in serving this purpose. With such upgrades in recruitment practices, admissions offices can better target women candidates to pursue a GME degree.

Transform career breaks into opportunities to learn

Milestone events such as marriage, pregnancy, and motherhood often lead to career breaks and sabbaticals. By designing special electives and courses for such times, schools can turn a disadvantage into an opportunity for supplementary learning. [Mba.com](https://www.ft.com/content/ace633b4-f10c-4381-bc37-3239581df428) notes that despite some inhibiting factors, GME is a feasible and advisable option for new parents on a career break or parental leave. Online or part-time MBAs and other flexible courses boost career prospects once new parents are ready to resume work.

Marriage, motherhood, and MBA – can they go together?

Yes. Ms. Radhika Deb Roy²⁸, a career woman who deferred her MBA study at Wharton in 2020 due to the pandemic, does not wish to delay it anymore. Her concerns relate to balancing her career, MBA study, and motherhood – “Your career cycle is running in tandem with your biological cycle. Friends and I have spoken about freezing our eggs,” she quipped, adding that an well-timed MBA will help to get her into a senior managerial role before she starts a family.

Ms. Darsha Kikani, an IIM Ahmedabad alum with an illustrious management career behind her, provides, shared the following recommendations for schools on this subject. In summation:

- Arrange for on-campus family counseling centers to lighten the load of married women students, working women, young mothers, and similar groups in order to help them strike a study-work-life balance
- Invite overseas corporations to facilitate international placement
- Introduce electives that offer summer placement, international internships, or similar exposures
- Start student and educator exchange programs

28 <https://www.ft.com/content/ace633b4-f10c-4381-bc37-3239581df428>

Pilot creative solutions to help stem the outflow of women in GME

As the pandemic recedes globally, Indian GME aspirants are sending their scores to overseas schools with renewed zeal. The COVID-19-induced lull is no more; those who can afford to pursue GME courses abroad are flocking to fly to pricier pastures. Overall, score-sending and enrolments in top business schools abroad have rebounded by 35 percent.²⁹ What can be done to stem this outflow? Here are a few creative solutions that could be piloted:

Bring the world to India.

Schools could experiment with bringing the best of the international students' experience to their domestic campuses. For example, recruiting world-class faculty from abroad for limited periods and marketing their expertise to prospective applicants could bring the world to Indian schools' doorsteps.

Along with that, steps such as inviting international companies to campus recruitment events could improve women's representation in the GME domain at home. Establishing and constantly updating global networks of peer groups, mentors, and colleagues in the case of working women candidates is another potential prospect.

Affordability and cost-effectiveness.

These have long been Indian schools' trump cards. With a price differential of around 300 percent between high-end Indian and international MBA,³⁰ domestic business schools are well-justified in their value proposition of affordable

quality education. They can reinforce this inherent advantage and target price-sensitive women students with solutions such as scholarships, soft loans in partnership with banks, and other forms of financial aid.

Establish and effectively market a tech advantage.

Technological tailwinds can fuel growth as nothing else can. Realizing the might of tech-empowered pedagogies, some schools abroad are establishing dedicated tech teams whose cutting-edge solutions are readying GME for an orbit jump. The heady cocktail of VR, AR, AI, and ML is revolutionizing education delivery.

By strengthening schools' technological backbone and enforcing digital transformation at scale, business schools can catalyze many women-centric measures that empower them to bring down entry barriers. For example, admissions offices can arrange for pre-interview virtual bubbles with women candidates – an acclimatization initiative of sorts, which can assuage their anxieties, address queries and concerns, and better prepare them for upcoming interviews. Such creative approaches can disrupt traditional GME education delivery in women students' favor.

“In the fast-rapidly-changing business environment, you need innovation to compete at different levels. And the first step for innovation is creativity,” says Helena Gonzales Gomez, HR Professor and Head of the People and Organizations Department at **NEOMA Business School**.

29 More Indians head to top B-schools abroad, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/more-indians-head-to-top-b-schools-abroad/articleshow/78327851.cms?from=mdr>

30 <https://leverageedu.com/blog/indian-mba-vs-foreign-mba/#:-text=Cost%20of%20Study%20%E2%80%93%20Indian%20MBA%20Vs%20Foreign%20MBA,-The%20cost%20of&text=An%20MBA%20in%20India%20may,range%20of%20%2455%2C000%20to%20%2480%2C000.>

31 <https://www.mbastudies.com/article/4-ways-business-schools-use-technology-to-teach/>

Conclusion

Ancient India was a knowledge and learning-centric progressive culture, with women getting as much say in it as men. However, in the contemporary context of Indian women pursuing GME study, gender inequality persists, in domestic as well as international schools. This survey aims to provide a roadmap for business schools that would help them evolve strategies to reduce this gender gap.

The candidate profile summary shows that the target group of prospective students is predominantly young, below 30 years of age. Many have less than a year or no work experience, and over half of them possess an undergraduate degree. Since the timeline of this survey spans the pandemic, the other important finding is that as the virus recedes and travel restrictions ease, candidates are ready to spread their wings and study at international schools. While showing this tendency, the candidates also conveyed that they want to hedge the risks and improve return on investment by opting for proven, mainstream, and in-demand specializations, both at home and abroad. For post-GME job aspirations, the target group showed a predominant preference for Central and South Asia as their work destination. However, this may be a transitory trend as the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to impact decisions in the labor market throughout the year. In terms of their preferred industry to work in, although currently the candidates prefer more established industries, newly-emerging sectors are very much on their minds. Schools have to be proactive in including more curricula and offering more choices to students. Also on this parameter, candidates prioritized the industry over the work destination as a deciding factor. On preferred job functions, responses in the domestic and international categories were found to be in opposition. Functions most preferred in the domestic segment were least preferred in the international counterpart, and some prominent

functions in one category were totally missing in the other. Importantly, information technology/data science, despite being a major component of STEM MBA programs, was among the least preferred choices. Herein lie the challenges and opportunities for business schools to blend technology and management and produce hybrid, tech-oriented management programs to give the world Industry 4.0 leaders.

The share of women in top management roles is rising steadily. In India, over 98 percent of Indian businesses have at least one woman in a senior management role, and 47 percent of mid-sized businesses have women as their CEOs.³² And yet, gender balance in graduate management classrooms is evasive. India has a long way to go before it catches up with the global median of 41 percent gender parity. From being wishful to being willing, the recommendations of this report show the path to better representation of Indian women in the GME arena.

As the Foster School of Business describes it, the need of the hour is to produce more femme-BAs than MBAs³³.

32 <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/india-ahead-of-world-average-on-women-in-senior-management-report/articleshow/81318172.cms?from=mdr>

33 <https://www.bschoools.org/blog/femme-ba-foster-school-of-business>

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