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IIMs see rise in women students this year

More female students are now competing for the Common Admission Test (CAT) that has eventually resulted in improved gender diversity amongst students in IIMs

Written by [Neeti Nigam](#) | New Delhi | Updated: August 30, 2019 9:27:16 am

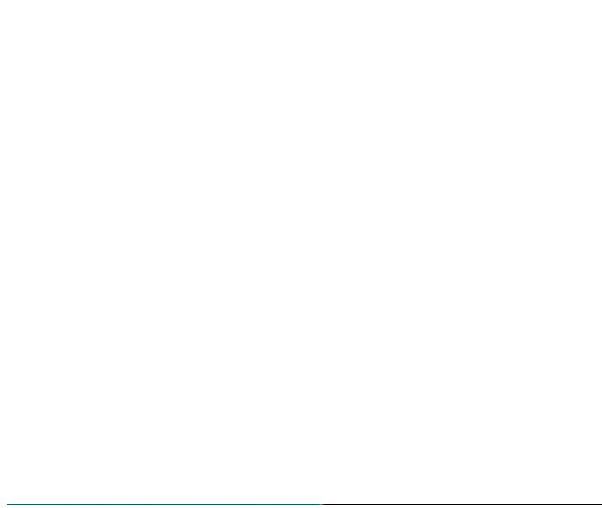


Among the 20 IIMs in India, Bangalore, Rohtak, Sambalpur and Tiruchirappalli have seen a steady rise in the enrollment. (Express Photo/ Representational image)

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) has witnessed a better gender balance in the current academic year with overall 1,619 female candidates gaining admission as against 1,349 in 2017-19. As per data shared by the Human Resource Development Ministry in Rajya Sabha last month, the percentage of female students to the total students admitted in IIMs for the year 2017, 2018 and 2019 are 25.69 per cent, 26.85 per cent and 30.61 per cent, respectively.

Among the 20 IIMs in India, Bangalore, Rohtak, Sambalpur and Tiruchirappalli have seen a steady rise in enrollment. The oldest among these — IIM-B — registered 114 female students in the 2017-19 batch for its flagship MBA programme, which grew to 165 in 2019-21.

While the prestigious IIM-Ahmedabad's ratio of women applicants has plummeted this year, the silver lining comes with the newer IIMs who have scored better in ensuring seats for women. (see graph)



NAME OF THE INSTITUTE	2017-19 BATCH	2018-20 BATCH	2019-21 BATCH
	No. of Female Students	No. of Female Students	No. of Female Students
IIM Ahmedabad	132	121	114
IIM Bangalore	114	121	165
IIM Kozhikode	103	108	111
IIM Lucknow	98	123	124
IIM Indore	256	232	220
IIM Calcutta	143	124	152
IIM Shillong	25	77	83
IIM Rohtak	22	120	124
IIM Raipur	52	42	38
IIM Ranchi	88	106	117
IIM Udaipur	60	66	88
IIM Tiruchirappalli	33	24	95
IIM Kashipur	14	06	29
IIM Amritsar	20	03	17
IIM Nagpur	02	25	20
IIM Sirmaur	01	16	15
IIM Sambalpur	11	00	46
IIM Visakhapatnam	13	18	45
IIM Bodhgaya	00	01	03
IIM Jammu	12	16	13
Total	1199	1349	1619



List of IIMs with the number of female students enrollment. (Graph: Gargi Singh)

More female candidates apply for CAT

Among these, IIM-Rohtak has seen the most significant increase with 6 per cent female students in 2016 (9 girls) to 50 per cent of the batch in consecutive two years (119 in 2018 and 124 in 2019).

Director IIM-Rohtak, Prof Dheeraj Sharma said corporates today have made diversity a top priority, which has led to more women showing interest in higher education, especially in management courses. “More female students are now competing for the Common Admission Test (CAT) that has eventually resulted in improved gender diversity among students in IIMs,” he said.

In CAT 2018, out of 2.41 lakh candidates, 84,350 females applied as against 78,009 in 2017. In 2015, only 69,176 had registered.

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Why most drop-outs from IITs, IIMs are from reserved category?



Incidentally, the highest summer internship offer for the batch of 2018-20 in IIM-Nagpur was made to a female candidate. Certain companies, such as Amazon, have addressed gender balance under their diversity hiring programs.

As per Madhu Srivastava, Group CHRO, Vedanta Group, there is a significant increase in the number of women hires in high impact roles across industries, which will result in more women in leadership roles. “The IIMs’ selection criteria

seems to encourage diversity. Every time we visit campuses, we find a greater diversity percentage, which is positive news,” she noted.

To each its own

According to the HRD Ministry, IIMs are free to frame their own admission policy. However, all IIMs have put additional weightage on increasing the number of women candidates.

Initially, higher points were given to academic performance in class 10 and 12 but most IIMs are modifying their selection policy. For instance, IIM-Nagpur has incorporated a diversity score during the shortlisting of candidates.

“Women usually perform better at this level and it was expected to improve the gender ratio in classrooms. However, a more direct measure of diversity score was taken to ensure gender balance,” said admissions chairperson Prof Varsha Khandker, IIM-Nagpur. The weightage given to diversity during stage II of the admission process in the institute was increased from 5 per cent in 2018-20 to 10 per cent in 2019-21.

“The number of female candidates in a batch depends on two factors — the admission policy of IIM Nagpur and the pull from other institutes. As a result of our policy, the proportion of female candidates called for the personal interview increased from 21.73 per cent (2018-20) to 29.78 per cent (2019-21). Also, in the final offers, the percentage for women went up marginally from 24.68 per cent in 2018-20 to 25.71 per cent in 2019-21,” informed Khandker.

Girls performed better in interviews

From 124 in 2018 to 152 this year, IIM-Calcutta has seen persistent growth in female candidates. While they deny changing any admission policy, they have maintained some extra points for them during the interview. According to Professor Sumanta Basu, chairman of the admission committee, IIM-C, this time, four per cent extra weightage is assigned under gender diversity during the second stage, while deciding the interview list.

“The applicants were interviewed to gauge their managerial aptitude, knowledge and analytical skills. The credit for a higher percentage of female students goes to