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MUMBAI, Sept. 24 -- Business schools in India, Singapore, UK and France are eroding the grip of US schools as Indians look at management education options on all continents.

In the testing year 2012, 18% of the 1.33 lakh Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) scores that Indians sent to business schools were to those in India, up from 13.5% in testing year 2008.

A testing year runs from July 1 to June 30. Schools in the UK (7% to 8%), Singapore (4.5% to 7.5%) and France (3.5% to 5%) also experienced a growth in their popularity in the same period. Comparatively, the proportion of scores that Indians sent to US schools fell from 64% to 51%.

"People's choices are becoming more sophisticated now as they are looking for choices at all continents," said Ashish Bhardwaj, regional director, South Asia, of the Graduate Management Admission Council, while visiting the city on Sunday. GMAT is the admission criterion for more than 1,500 B-schools worldwide.

"The US is among the costliest, so it is a question of return on investment," said Abbasali Gabula, deputy director, external relations and administration at SP Jain Institute of Management and Research in Andheri. "With the current jobs scene it doesn't make sense to go to countries where the postMBA situation isn't good."

Popular schools outside the US include the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad, INSEAD in France and **Singapore Management University** in Singapore. The growing popularity of Indian programmes is also evident through the fact that students sent GMAT scores to 128 programmes in testing year 2012, compared to just 24 in testing year 2007.

In testing year 2012, Indian test takers jumped from 25,394 to 30,213, a 19% growth. India is third when it comes to GMAT test takers across the world, following the US and China. Published by HT Syndication with permission from HT Mumbai.

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