

## Economic Times

## Families on B-school campuses on the rise

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# Families on B-school campuses on the rise

## An Evolved Support System Across B-Schools Is Helping Students Take Such Decisions

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NEW DELHI

IT'S THE best of both worlds! A good MBA degree coupled with a great time with the family is drawing mid-career professionals to get their families along to B-school campuses. Experienced executives who are married and want to pursue MBA are increasingly taking their families to campuses to not let go off the quality time they can spend together.

An evolved support system across B-schools is helping them take such decisions. From fully-furnished housing facilities, convenience stores, recreation centres to play areas for kids, the schools are offering them all.

A new concept in India, introduced by the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, it's catching up with others. Besides ISB, IIMA, IIMC, SP Jain and a new B-school, Indus World School of Business, launched by Career Launcher, also plan to provide similar facilities.

ISB had 118 families staying on campus while 67 students out of 72 of IIMA from the 2008 PGPX programme (residential programme for

experienced professionals) were staying with family, 16 of the 42 students from IIMC's PGPX course this year had spouse and kids staying with them.

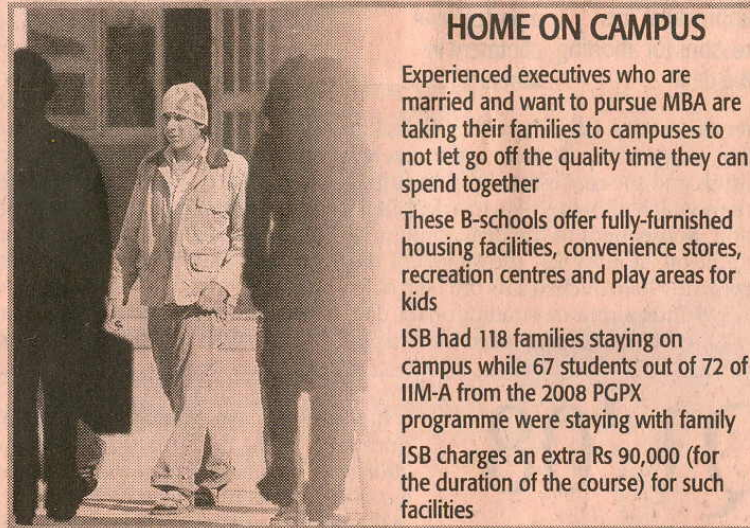
Delhi's Vishwakirti Sharma is a case in point. The orthopaedist who is a father of two had his entire family staying with him. His wife, a doctor herself took a sabbatical to join him with their two-and-a-half-year-old child.

"We had a great time together and it was an opportunity for both of us. I would not have been able to concentrate as much if they had stayed away from me, thinking how they would be doing alone."

That shows why the number of families staying on campus has gone up from 28 in 2002 to 118 this year at ISB. They are allotted a fully furnished studio apartment.

If the family has kids, there are day care facilities with a special play area for toddlers and young kids. ISB charges an extra Rs 90,000 (for the duration of the course) for such facilities.

In India, there are few institutes that offer such options, though the trend is changing. That's one of the constraints that bar many from pur-



### HOME ON CAMPUS

Experienced executives who are married and want to pursue MBA are taking their families to campuses to not let go off the quality time they can spend together

These B-schools offer fully-furnished housing facilities, convenience stores, recreation centres and play areas for kids

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suing a full-time MBA after marriage. Many professionals choose to study abroad where they get those facilities. Even for Vishwakirti, Duke, Kelloggs Business School was the alternative he considered.

For many married professionals inability to support the family with physical presence is a major concern. Arun Pratap Singh, an IIMA 2008 PGPX

graduate says, "I have a 12-year-old son and my family couldn't relocate due to his education. I feel that was a big mistake, I couldn't even offer help when my family needed it. There were 65 families staying here and they had a great time. I missed that part though I enjoyed doing the programme."

As experienced Indian professionals continue studies post marriage in

bigger numbers, the demand for a support system is growing. Even 5-10 years back, very few married executives took up an MBA after marriage and the requirement for similar support was not felt. That is changing now as the Indian economy is growing at a fast pace and people are trying to upgrade skills to tap the potential.

Sunil Rai, chairperson, PGPM (one year), SPJain Institute, Mumbai says, "This is a new trend that's catching up. The demand will create supply as more professionals opt for such courses." Because of the land constraint in Mumbai, the institute has outsourced family residential requirements to an agency which now takes care of this. The three-year-old programme has only four families, as the need goes up, the school plans to improve facilities.

"If there are a 100 families, then it makes sense to rent an entire apartment blocks else it's not feasible. We plan to act according to needs," adds Mr Rai. But for professionals who want their families around as they upgrade skills, such initiatives will be a great help.

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