How to choose the ideal program?

There are multiple factors to be considered when choosing your ideal program. The simple answer is: try and visualize your career after the program. Your ideal MS program should make you eligible for those jobs. In most cases, the ideal program choice is based on a combination of the below-mentioned factors.

1. Interests

The most obvious reason, but this often gets overlooked in favour of the other parameters in this list. If your area of interest is aligned with what you study, you will naturally do well in the program and interview with potential recruiters more confidently. As the cliché goes, an MS degree and then, a career in your area of interest will not feel like 'work'. Introspect and speak with the people you trust to help identify what your interests are.

2. Career Prospects

Undeniably, an international MS degree should offer better opportunities than continuing your education or career in India. International education also is usually accompanied by a hefty price tag, so you should choose a program that will help you recover your expenses in the short-term and give you steady growth opportunities later as well.

3. Current Qualifications

This is a factor that usually limits your possible program options. Naturally, a lot of programs require your previous education to be in the same or a similar domain so that you can cope up with the advanced level of an MS program comfortably. Some MiM programs expect you to *not* have studied business/management previously. Countries like the USA or Canada will expect you to have a 4-year undergraduate degree usually. Not meeting these conditions will lead to a straightforward rejection, so these need to be considered properly.

4. Visa Implications

The impact of a particular program choice on your post-study visa also needs to be considered. The USA, for example, has STEM-designated programs (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) that allow you to stay back for 36 months after graduation. In Canada, the length of the stay back period is dependent only on the length of the degree undertaken. In Ireland, for example, candidates pursuing careers in Computer Science and Information Technology are prioritized for post-study visas. On the other hand, Switzerland only gives students 6 months after graduation to secure a job.

Your ideal program, hence, aligns with your interests, has good job prospects, is in line with your current academic and professional qualifications, and also allows you to stay back after completing your education.