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SUPPLIER SELECTION CRITERIA OF RESTAURANT: A CROSS-INDUSTRY LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract:

Previous studies have extensively explored supplier selection criteria; however, there has been a notable scarcity of in-depth investigations into the specific criteria for selecting suppliers in the restaurant industry. Thus, this research commences with an overview of supplier selection criteria, followed by a comprehensive review of criteria employed across diverse industries. Through this review, this study identify and distill five key criteria uniquely suited for restaurants: Finance, Technology, Product Quality, Cost, and Service of Supplier. These criteria are subsequently subjected to thorough analysis. This study ultimately contributes novel insights into supplier selection within the restaurant sector, providing the industry with robust decision-making support and practical guidance.

Keywords:

Restaurant, Supplier Selection Criteria, Cross-Industry, Literature Review

Introduction

Supplier selection criteria are crucial for the operational efficiency and success of various industries. Extensive research has been conducted in numerous sectors, such as manufacturing, construction, and technology, to identify and prioritize the factors influencing the choice of

suppliers (Dickson, 1966; Verma & Pullman, 1998; De Boer, Labro, & Morlacchi, 2001; Chai, Liu, & Ngai, 2013). For instance, in manufacturing, criteria like production capacity, quality control, and cost-effectiveness have been extensively explored. In the construction industry, studies have emphasized reliability, adherence to project specifications, and on-time delivery as key considerations (Famiyeh & Kwarteng, 2018; Sakai, Bhavathathan, Alho, Hyodo, & Ben-Akiva, 2020; Garg, 2021).

While there is a wealth of literature on supplier selection criteria in these industries, research on the specific criteria applicable to the restaurant sector is noticeably limited. Unlike other sectors, the restaurant industry has unique requirements and challenges in supplier selection (Gama, Alves, & Oliveira, 2020). For instance, factors like the quality and consistency of ingredients, compliance with food safety standards, and the ability to meet fluctuating demand play a pivotal role in the restaurant supply chain. The scarcity of dedicated research in this area presents an opportunity to contribute valuable insights (Cho, Bonn, Giunipero, & Jaggi, 2021).

Methodology

This study aims to bridge this gap by conducting a comprehensive exploration of supplier selection criteria tailored specifically to the restaurant industry. By leveraging insights from diverse industries, the research seeks to identify and distill key criteria that are particularly relevant for restaurants. Through an in-depth analysis, the study intends to offer valuable recommendations and insights that can enhance the supplier selection process for restaurants, contributing to the overall efficiency and sustainability of their operations.

Overview of Supplier Selection Criteria

As shown in Table 1, the early research on supplier selection criteria conducted by Dickson (1966) identified over 20 key factors influencing supplier choice. Regarding supplier selection, different industries and time periods have varying criteria. Mawson and Fearne (1997) outlined supplier selection criteria (supplier selection criteria), which encompass technical competence, volume capability, pricing competitiveness, reliability, and quality consistency. It is important to note that these criteria can vary based on the specific task or product in question. For instance, there is an increased emphasis on technical aspects when dealing with the uncertainty of new product development and introduction. Supplier selection criteria in various industries encompass factors such as quality, cost, delivery performance, and flexibility, as emphasized by Verma and Pullman (1998). These criteria are chosen for their significance and alignment with operational goals.

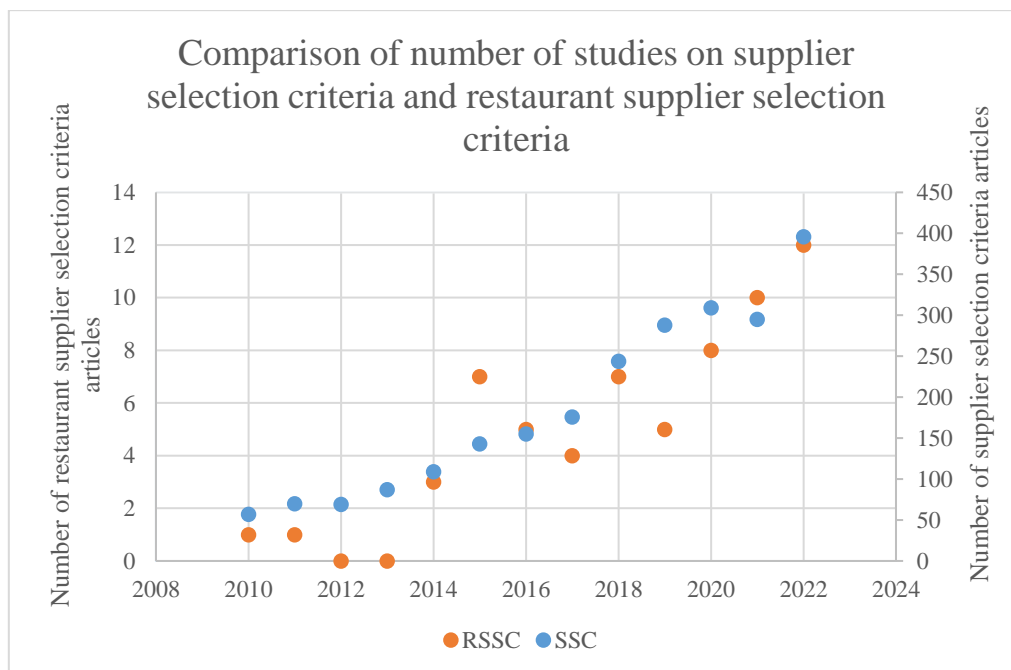
Furthermore, Rezaei and Ortt (2012) categorized supplier selection criteria into 'element of exchange'-related, supplier-related, and relationship-related. Sustainability factors, integrated using grey system and rough set methodologies (Wang, Chen, Lee, & Tsai, 2013), consider environmental, social, and economic aspects. AlMaian, Needy, Walsh, and Alves (2015) identified top performance measures in the construction industry: quality of work, delivery delays, past relationships, cost competitiveness, and technological capability. Jain and Singh (2020) used fuzzy Kano model for economic criteria in Indian steel industry. Sakai et al. (2020) assessed utility based on travel time, freight, and demand size in "household/light manufacturing goods" industry.

Table 1: Dickson's supplier selection criterias

NO.	Factor	NO.	Factor
1	Quality	13	Management and organization
2	Delivery	14	Operating controls
3	Performance history	15	Repair service
4	Warranties and claim policies	16	Attitude
5	Production facilities and capacity	17	Impression
6	Price	18	Packaging ability
7	Technical capability	19	Labor relations record
8	Financial position	20	Geographical location
9	Procedural compliance	21	Amount of past business
10	Communication system	22	Training aids
11	Reputation and position	23	Reciprocal arrangements
12	Desire for business		

Source: (Dickson, 1966)

Supplier selection criteria constitute a pivotal component of supply chain management. Despite the wealth of literature on the subject, there is a relative dearth of specialized research focused on supplier selection criteria within the context of restaurant operations. By searching on Scopus using the keyword vendor selection criteria, the data in Figure 1 was obtained. Through comparison, it becomes evident that there is a scarcity of literature focusing on supplier selection criteria specifically tailored to the restaurant industry.

**Figure 1: Comparison of Number of Studies on Supplier Selection Criteria and Restaurant Supplier Selection Criteria**

Supplier selection for restaurants involves a meticulous evaluation process encompassing various critical criteria. Foremost among these is the quality of products supplied; restaurants prioritize suppliers who consistently deliver fresh, high-quality ingredients. Reliability and consistency in meeting delivery schedules are paramount to ensuring a smooth operation, allowing restaurants to meet customer demands without disruptions. Striking a balance between competitive pricing and product quality is crucial for optimizing profit margins (Brindley & Oxborrow, 2014; Gattorna, 2017). The consistent availability of products is another key consideration, with suppliers expected to meet the restaurant's demand and scale with its growth. Compliance with industry standards and certifications, such as those related to food safety or organic sourcing, is non-negotiable. Proximity of the supplier's location and efficient delivery logistics play a role, with many restaurants preferring local suppliers to reduce transportation costs and support the community (Panwar, Pinkse, & De Marchi, 2022; Nurhayati & Zulfikar, 2023).

Supplier Selection Criteria Measurement

Due to the relatively limited research on the selection criteria for restaurant suppliers, this study provides a comprehensive summary of supplier selection criteria in restaurant and other industries, as shown in Table 2. Firstly, the last three rows of the table detail the indicators for supplier selection criteria in restaurant-type businesses. Subsequently, by categorizing businesses in other industries by year, this study found that the key indicators for supplier selection criteria do not vary significantly across different industries. Each industry has established specific supplier selection criteria based on its own characteristics and unique attributes. This study formulates supplier selection criteria tailored to restaurants by utilizing the indicators provided in the table, allowing for the measurement of their impact on both restaurant performance and competitive advantage.

Table 2: Supplier Selection Criteria in Different Industries

Factors										Industry or Case Study
Authors	Quality	Delivery	Service	Products	Cost or price	Technical capability	Financial position	Profile	Environmental	
(Ali, Zhang, Liu, & Shoaib, 2023)	√		√		√			√	√	Global supplier
(Islam & Arakawa, 2022)	√	√			√			√		Thailand procurement
(Rahman, Bari, Ali, & Taghipour, 2022)	√	√	√	√					√	Textile Dyeing
(Baki, 2022)	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	No specific
(Tong, Wang, & Pu, 2022)	√	√	√						√	SME
(Cho et al., 2021)			√	√	√	√	√			Manufacturing
(Mina, Kannan, Gholami-Zanjani, & Biuki, 2021)	√	√								Mechanical manufacturing
(Fei, 2020)	√		√		√			√		Petrochemical
(Aharonovitz, Vidal Vieira, & Suyama, 2018)		√	√		√	√	√			No specific
(Zeller & Drescher, 2017)	√	√		√	√					Brazilian retail sector
(Chen, Yeh, & Huang, 2014)	√		√			√				German restaurant
(Punniyamoorthy, Mathiyalagan, & Parthiban, 2011)	√	√	√		√	√	√		√	Computer, communication and consumer electronics (3C)
(Kuo, Wang, & Tien, 2010)	√	√	√		√				√	No specific
(Lee, Kang, Hsu, & Hung, 2009)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Manufacturing
(Cho et al., 2021)			√	√	√		√			High-tech industry
(Gama et al., 2020)	√	√		√	√					Restaurant
(Huang, Guo, & Li, 2015)	√			√	√	√				Restaurant
Total	14	11	12	8	13	7	5	4	7	Restaurant

In the dynamic restaurant industry, the criteria for selecting suppliers are crucial to ensuring seamless operations and meeting the diverse demands of the local market. Financial stability is paramount, as it ensures a reliable supply of ingredients despite market fluctuations. Product quality holds significant importance, reflecting the high standards of restaurants' discerning consumers. Suppliers are expected to consistently deliver fresh, top-tier ingredients that

contribute to the authenticity and excellence of restaurant offerings. Striking a balance between cost-effectiveness and quality is imperative in restaurants' competitive market (Trienekens, Wognum, Beulens, & van der Vorst, 2012; Bumblauskas, Mann, Dugan, & Rittmer, 2020; Cho et al., 2021; Liu, Zhao, Wu, & Zhuang, 2022). Service of supplier reliability is a cornerstone in the fast-paced restaurant scene of restaurants. Timely deliveries, prompt responses to inquiries, and excellent customer service are essential for maintaining operational efficiency. By adhering to these supplier selection standards tailored to different environment, restaurants can establish robust supply chains that position them to thrive in the competitive culinary landscape of the city (Cho et al., 2021; Bag et al., 2023; Ngo, 2023). Therefore, As shown in Figure 1, the five criteria of finance, technology, product quality, cost and service are selected as the supplier selection criteria for restaurants.



Figure 2: Five Criteria for Restaurant Supplier Selection

Finance

In the intricate web of the restaurant industry, supplier selection is a pivotal determinant of a restaurant's success, and one of the key aspects is the financial stability of the chosen suppliers. Financial considerations play a crucial role in ensuring a steady and reliable flow of ingredients, maintaining operational efficiency, and ultimately impacting the overall profitability and sustainability of the restaurant (Swink, Hu, & Zhao, 2022; Vasilakakis & Sdrali, 2023). First and foremost, the financial stability of a supplier directly influences their ability to weather economic uncertainties and market fluctuations. In the context of restaurant industry, where external factors like changes in consumer preferences, economic conditions, or unforeseen events can impact the market, having financially stable suppliers is imperative. A supplier with a solid financial foundation is better equipped to navigate challenges, ensuring that they can continue to provide consistent and uninterrupted service to their restaurant clients (Alalawneh, Al-Omar, & Alkhatib, 2022; Lucas & Ramires, 2022). The financial stability of a supplier also impacts their ability to scale operations and meet the growing demands of a restaurant.

Financial considerations play a pivotal role in restaurant supplier selection criteria. Restaurant owners and managers must carefully assess potential suppliers to ensure they meet financial requirements and contribute to overall business success (Vasilakakis & Sdrali, 2023). Financial factors encompass pricing and cost-efficiency, payment terms, supplier financial stability, quality and consistency, contractual agreements, performance metrics, and sustainability and

ethical considerations. Restaurants must strike a balance between cost-effectiveness and quality, evaluate supplier financial stability, ensure consistent product supply, establish clear contractual terms and performance metrics, and also consider ethical and sustainability factors to align with their values and attract conscientious customers (Swink et al., 2022). Failure to consider financial factors in restaurant supplier selection may result in adverse consequences (Lucas & Ramires, 2022), including reduced profitability due to high costs, cash flow problems stemming from unfavorable payment terms, compromised product quality, supplier unreliability, contractual disputes, missed cost-saving opportunities, and ethical concerns, all of which can harm the restaurant's success and reputation (Alalawneh et al., 2022).

Technology

In the contemporary restaurant landscape, technology has become a pivotal factor in supplier selection criteria, influencing various facets of the supply chain and operational efficiency. The integration of technology in the supply chain is paramount for optimizing processes, and one key criterion is a supplier's capability to leverage technology for efficient order fulfillment, reducing lead times and minimizing the risk of stockouts (Cho et al., 2021; Yazdani, Pamucar, Chatterjee, & Torkayesh, 2022). An effective technological supplier should offer an efficient ordering system that seamlessly integrates with the restaurant's inventory management software.

Automated systems enhance accuracy, reduce manual errors, and enable real-time tracking of stock levels, ensuring optimal inventory management and responsiveness to changing demand patterns (Cho et al., 2021). Transparency in data visibility is another crucial aspect. An advanced supplier provides real-time insights into product availability, shipping status, and pricing fluctuations. This transparency empowers restaurants to make informed decisions, anticipate disruptions, and optimize menu offerings based on ingredient availability and pricing trends (Duong et al., 2020; Han, Lee, Edvardsson, & Verma, 2021). In terms of food safety and quality, technology plays a crucial role in ensuring that suppliers adhere to the highest standards. Quality control technologies, such as sensor-based monitoring, blockchain for traceability, and real-time analytics, enhance transparency in tracking and verifying the quality of ingredients throughout the supply chain (da Cunha, 2021; Jagtap, Saxena, & Salonitis, 2021). An essential criterion is the supplier's adaptability to emerging technologies. Suppliers that invest in and embrace emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence for demand forecasting or the Internet of Things for real-time monitoring, demonstrate a commitment to staying at the forefront of industry trends (Silva, Pereira, & Hendry, 2023).

Technical considerations in restaurant supplier selection are vital for maintaining quality and efficiency (Cho et al., 2021). Restaurants must ensure that suppliers meet product quality and safety standards, offer consistent and reliable deliveries, integrate with technology systems, adhere to food safety and hygiene regulations, provide guidance on storage and shelf life, offer specialized equipment and training when necessary, support customization and innovation, scale their operations as needed, maintain traceability and transparency, and contribute to efficient waste management. These technical factors collectively contribute to the restaurant's ability to deliver high-quality food, streamline operations, and uphold safety standards, all of which are crucial for success in the industry (Yazdani et al., 2022). Neglecting technical factors in restaurant supplier selection can lead to detrimental outcomes, including inconsistent product quality, food safety risks, operational inefficiencies, increased waste, limited innovation, customer dissatisfaction, and legal compliance issues (Cho et al., 2021). Proper

consideration of technical criteria is essential to ensure the restaurant's success, maintain quality standards, adhere to food safety regulations, and provide efficient and innovative services to customers, ultimately safeguarding its reputation and profitability (Duong et al., 2020; Han et al., 2021).

Product Quality

The role of the product quality in restaurant supplier selection is pivotal, as it directly impacts the quality, consistency, and safety of menu offerings. Restaurants prioritize suppliers that provide high-quality, menu-appropriate, and fresh products with suitable shelf lives. Key considerations include customization options, specialty items, transparent sourcing, and compliant packaging (Trienekens et al., 2012; Bumblauskas et al., 2020). Ultimately, Gama et al. (2020) thought that selecting the right supplier for their products is crucial for a restaurant's ability to consistently deliver appealing and safe dining experiences to customers while maintaining its reputation and profitability. Disregarding the product aspect in restaurant supplier selection can have detrimental effects, including inconsistent food quality, menu limitations, food safety risks, increased waste, missed opportunities for differentiation, customer dissatisfaction, and legal compliance issues. Proper consideration of product criteria is essential to ensure a restaurant can consistently provide high-quality, safe, and appealing menu items that meet customer expectations, maintain its reputation, and adhere to regulatory standards, ultimately safeguarding its success and profitability in the competitive food industry (Cho et al., 2021).

Evaluating a restaurant's supplier selection based on product quality involves a thorough examination of the ingredients and goods provided. The first aspect to consider is the quality of individual ingredients, including their freshness, taste, and overall condition. Assessing whether these ingredients meet the restaurant's standards for premium or specialty items is crucial for delivering high-quality dishes (Trienekens et al., 2012; Bumblauskas et al., 2020). Consistency in product quality over time is another critical factor. Reliable suppliers should consistently meet or exceed the restaurant's quality standards. Implementing regular inspections or quality control measures ensures ongoing consistency and helps identify any deviations from expected standards (Gama et al., 2020; Cho et al., 2021).

Cost

Cost plays a pivotal role in restaurant supplier selection criteria, exerting a profound impact on a restaurant's financial health and sustainability. Restaurants must prioritize competitive pricing, engage in negotiations for favorable terms, and carefully assess the total cost of ownership, which includes expenses such as shipping and storage (Huang et al., 2015). However, they must strike a balance between cost and product quality to maintain customer satisfaction. Favorable payment terms and long-term supplier relationships can offer financial flexibility and cost savings (Wu, Ku, & Wu, 2023). Cost analysis helps in selecting suppliers that offer the best value for money. Additionally, considerations about economies of scale and sustainability practices are vital for achieving a balanced and successful supplier selection strategy (Vasilakakis & Sdrali, 2023). Ignoring cost considerations in restaurant supplier selection can have detrimental consequences, including reduced profit margins, financial strain, competitive disadvantages, cash flow problems, increased waste, limited investment capacity, and potential sustainability concerns (Vasilakakis & Sdrali, 2023).

Measuring restaurant supplier selection criteria with a primary emphasis on cost involves a strategic and systematic evaluation process. The analysis begins with a thorough examination of the supplier's pricing structure, focusing on transparency, competitiveness, and overall fairness to facilitate accurate budgeting. A holistic view is adopted, considering not just the upfront purchase price but the total cost of ownership, encompassing ongoing expenses such as maintenance, support, and any hidden charges associated with the supplier's products or services (Cho et al., 2021). The consideration of volume discounts and negotiation flexibility is pivotal, offering opportunities for cost savings and customization based on specific needs, volume requirements, and budget constraints. Striking a balance between quality and cost is crucial to ensure that cost-effectiveness does not compromise the overall quality of the products or services provided by the supplier (Gama et al., 2020).

Service of Supplier

Restaurant supplier selection criteria, centered on service, form the bedrock of successful and enduring partnerships. Beyond the quality of products, the overall service experience, responsiveness, and support provided by suppliers play a pivotal role. Effective communication and timely responsiveness are critical, ensuring seamless interactions, addressing inquiries, and resolving issues promptly. Suppliers demonstrating a proactive approach to communication contribute to a reliable and efficient supply chain (Cho et al., 2021). Reliability in order fulfillment is paramount, and a supplier's consistent ability to deliver orders on time is a cornerstone of service excellence. This reliability ensures optimal inventory management, reducing the risk of stockouts or excess inventory. A supplier's track record for reliable order fulfillment is a key consideration for sustaining smooth restaurant operations (Bag et al., 2023). Flexibility and customization are integral components of service criteria. Suppliers willing to tailor solutions, accommodate changes in order quantities, and adapt to evolving requirements foster a more collaborative and responsive partnership. Service excellence extends to the supplier's commitment to quality assurance and consistency. Rigorous quality control measures ensure that products consistently meet or exceed specified standards, contributing to the maintenance of the restaurant's reputation (Ngo, 2023).

Service excellence involves a supplier's ability to proactively identify and prevent potential problems. Anticipating challenges, implementing preventive measures, and continuously improving processes demonstrate a commitment to providing reliable and proactive service. In the study of Swink et al. (2022), this approach minimizes disruptions and enhances overall operational efficiency. Transparent operations are fundamental to service criteria. Suppliers providing clear and transparent information about processes, pricing, and sourcing practices foster trust and collaboration. The efficiency of delivery and logistics is integral to service excellence. Suppliers optimizing delivery routes, providing accurate delivery tracking, and minimizing lead times contribute to the overall efficiency of restaurant operations (Ortiz-Barrios, Miranda-De la Hoz, López-Meza, Petrillo, & De Felice, 2020).

Service considerations in restaurant supplier selection are fundamental for ensuring operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Suppliers must reliably deliver orders on time, communicate effectively, and provide responsive customer support (Cho et al., 2021). Flexibility in accommodating changes, quality assurance measures, and swift problem resolution are also critical. Transparent pricing, education on new products, and consistency in service contribute to a positive supplier relationship (Bag et al., 2023). Furthermore, alignment with ethical and sustainability practices is increasingly important to meet evolving consumer

preferences and demonstrate social responsibility. In essence, service factors play a pivotal role in ensuring that a restaurant can seamlessly operate and provide a high level of service to its patrons (Ngo, 2023). However, neglecting service considerations in restaurant supplier selection can have adverse consequences, including delivery delays, communication breakdowns, challenges in resolving issues, and disruptions to operations (Dalal, Chiem, Karbassi, Liu, & Monroy-Hernández, 2023). Suppliers lacking flexibility and transparency may hinder the restaurant's ability to adapt to changing demands or manage costs effectively (Lyu, Roldán, Chin, Liu, & Li, 2022; Vasilakakis & Sdrali, 2023). Furthermore, the absence of quality assurance measures can lead to inconsistent product quality and potential damage to the restaurant's reputation. In essence, service factors are integral to ensuring seamless operations, customer satisfaction, and the overall success of the restaurant business (Di Pierro et al., 2023).

Results and Discussion

This comprehensive literature review, spanning diverse industries, elucidated supplier selection criteria, leading to the identification of five pivotal standards tailored for the restaurant sector: Finance, Technology, Product Quality, Cost, and Service of Supplier. Our review aimed to amalgamate cross-industry perspectives and subsequently conducted a meticulous analysis of these criteria. The study unveiled that the evaluation of restaurant supplier selection standards can be effectively quantified through these five dimensions. Notably, Finance addresses the financial stability of suppliers, while Technology emphasizes technological integration for operational efficiency. Product Quality underscores the consistent delivery of high-quality ingredients, and Cost navigates the delicate balance between competitive pricing and quality. Lastly, Service of Supplier focuses on effective communication, adherence to delivery schedules, and scalability. This research not only contributes academically but also furnishes practical insights for restaurant managers, furnishing a robust framework to fortify the efficiency and resilience of restaurant supply chains.

Limitations

This study faces two limitations, with one being the relatively limited research on supplier selection criteria within the restaurant industry, thus potentially constraining the feasibility and comprehensiveness of conducting a systematic literature review. Despite employing extensive literature collection measures, the study's scope and depth are inevitably constrained by the quantity and depth of available literature in this specific domain. Another limitation is the lack of classification for specific types of restaurants. Instead, the study distilled five selection criteria based on the dynamic environment in which restaurants operate. This comprehensive approach may result in a lack of in-depth understanding of specific types of restaurants, limiting the grasp of individual variations within the diverse landscape of the foodservice industry.

Future Research

In future research, a tailored approach to restaurant supplier selection criteria based on different types of restaurants could offer a more nuanced understanding of the industry's diverse needs. For instance, by categorizing and addressing the unique characteristics of fine dining establishments, fast-food chains, and other specific types of restaurants, researchers can provide targeted and practical insights for each category. Moreover, there is an opportunity to increase the focus on empirical studies, incorporating diverse antecedents and consequences within the context of supplier selection. This approach would contribute to a more

comprehensive exploration of the factors influencing supplier choices, fostering a deeper understanding of the dynamics, challenges, and opportunities that restaurants encounter in their supply chain management.

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