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Supplier Selection Strategies Adopted by Purchasing Specialists in the Algerian Industrial Sector Case Study: SPA Condor Electronics

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Abstract

This study explores supplier selection strategies within the purchasing function of the Algerian industrial sector, focusing on SPA Condor Electronics. Supplier selection is a strategic activity that influences costs, product quality, and supply continuity, especially in uncertain environments.

The research aimed to identify the main criteria, strategies, and challenges involved in selecting suppliers. A qualitative approach was adopted, involving semi-structured interviews with purchasing professionals and a documentary analysis of the company's internal tools and practices. The data were analysed thematically using NVivo software.

The findings showed that supplier selection is based on key criteria such as cost, quality, and delivery reliability, but is also strongly influenced by contextual factors like import restrictions and supplier availability. The study also highlights the use of both single and multiple sourcing strategies.

Overall, the research provides practical insights into supplier selection practices and contributes to a deeper understanding of purchasing strategies in the Algerian context.

Key Words: Supplier, Selection, Purchasing, Procurement, Strategies.

Résumé

Cette étude examine les stratégies de sélection des fournisseurs au sein de la fonction achats dans le secteur industriel algérien, en se concentrant sur le cas de SPA Condor Electronics. La sélection des fournisseurs constitue une activité stratégique influençant directement les coûts, la qualité et la continuité de l'approvisionnement, en particulier dans des environnements incertains.

L'objectif de cette recherche est d'identifier les principaux critères, stratégies et défis associés au processus de sélection des fournisseurs. Une approche qualitative a été adoptée, reposant sur des entretiens semi-directifs menés auprès de professionnels des achats, complétés par une analyse documentaire des outils et pratiques internes de l'entreprise. Les données ont été analysées selon une approche thématique à l'aide du logiciel NVivo.

Les résultats montrent que la sélection des fournisseurs repose sur des critères clés tels que le coût, la qualité et la fiabilité de livraison, tout en étant fortement influencée par des facteurs contextuels, notamment les restrictions à l'importation et la disponibilité des fournisseurs. L'étude met également en évidence le recours à des stratégies d'approvisionnement auprès d'un fournisseur unique ou de plusieurs fournisseurs.

Dans l'ensemble, cette recherche apporte des enseignements pratiques sur les pratiques de sélection des fournisseurs et contribue à une meilleure compréhension des stratégies d'achat dans le contexte algérien.

Mots clés : Fournisseur, Sélection, Achats, Approvisionnement, Stratégies.

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة استراتيجيات اختيار الموردين في وظيفة المشتريات في القطاع الصناعي الجزائري، مع التركيز على شركة كوندور للإلكترونيات. يُعد اختيار الموردين نشاطًا استراتيجيًا يؤثر على التكلفة والجودة واستمرارية التوريد، خاصة في البيئات غير المستقرة.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد المعايير الرئيسية والاستراتيجيات والتحديات المرتبطة باختيار الموردين. تم اعتماد منهج نوعي من خلال إجراء مقابلات شبه موجهة مع مختصين في مجال المشتريات مدعومة بتحليل وثائقي للأدوات والممارسات الداخلية للمؤسسة، وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام التحليل الموضوعي بمساعدة برنامج.NVivo

تُظهر النتائج أن اختيار الموردين يعتمد على معايير أساسية مثل التكلفة والجودة وأداء التسليم، كما يتأثر بشكل كبير بعوامل سياقية مثل قيود الاستيراد وتوفر الموردين. كما تُبرز الدراسة استخدام استراتيجيات التوريد الأحادي والمتعدد.

بشكل عام، توفر هذه الدراسة فهما اعمق لممارسات اختيار الموردين وتساهم في فهم أفضل لاستراتيجيات الشراء في السياق الجزائري.

الكلمات الفتاحية: المورد، الاختيار، الشراء، التوريد، الاستراتيجيات.

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Mansouri dounia

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAQ/AFNOR: French Certification and Standardization Bodies

AHP: Analytic Hierarchy Process

BTP: Bâtiment et Travaux Publics (Construction and Public Works)

CIPS: Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply

CRM: Customer Relationship Management

DA: Dinar Algérien (Algerian Dinar)

DG: Directeur Général (General Manager)

ERP: Enterprise Resource Planning

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

INAPI: Institut National Algérien de la Propriété Industrielle

ISO: International Organization for Standardization

JIT: Just-In-Time

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

MCDM: Multi-Criteria Decision-Making

NVivo: Qualitative Data Analysis Software

OH&S: Occupational Health and Safety

PCA: Président du Conseil d'Administration (Chairman of the Board)

PLS: Partial Least Squares

PSM: Purchasing and Supply Management

R&D: Research and Development

RFQ: Request for Quotation

SAV: Service Après-Vente (After-Sales Service)

SCM: Supply Chain Management

SMEs: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

SOEs: State-Owned Enterprises

SPA: Société Par Actions (Joint-Stock Company)

SRM: Supplier Relationship Management

SST: Santé et Sécurité au Travail (Occupational Health and Safety)

TOPSIS: Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution

TQM: Total Quality Management

VIKOR: VIseKriterijumska Optimizacija I Kompromisno Resenje

INTRODUCTION

The ability of an organization to ensure efficiency, competitiveness, and continuity in its operations largely depends on how well it manages its supply chain, particularly its purchasing function. Supplier selection represents a critical component of this function, as it directly influences cost control, product quality, and supply reliability. In an increasingly globalized and competitive environment, organizations must carefully choose their suppliers to maintain performance and achieve strategic objectives.

The purchasing function has evolved significantly over time. It is no longer limited to operational activities such as ordering and negotiating prices, but has become a strategic function that contributes to value creation and competitive advantage. Effective supplier evaluation allows firms to build strong partnerships, reduce risks, and enhance overall supply chain performance.

In today's uncertain and dynamic business environment, companies face multiple challenges such as market volatility, supply disruptions, and increasing customer expectations. These challenges require organizations to adopt flexible and well-structured supplier choice strategies. In developing countries like Algeria, these issues are even more complex due to factors such as import dependency, regulatory constraints, and logistical difficulties.

The existing literature on supplier selection offers solid theoretical and methodological insights; however, its relevance to the Algerian context remains limited. Most previous studies have been conducted in developed countries and emphasize formal and systematic selection models, with limited empirical validation in emerging economies. Moreover, research conducted in Algeria tends to focus on specific sectors and gives little attention to the role of purchasing professionals within industrial organizations. As a result, there is still a significant gap in understanding how supplier selection practices are practically applied in the Algerian industrial sector, particularly from an empirical and qualitative perspective.

Therefore, understanding how companies select their suppliers and what supplier selection approaches they adopt has become essential. This study focuses on examining supplier selection practices within the Algerian industrial sector, with a particular emphasis on SPA Condor Electronics.

Research Problem and Questions

According to recent studies, supplier selection is a complex and multi-criteria decision-making process that involves evaluating various factors such as cost, quality, delivery performance, and supplier reliability. While many theoretical models and tools have been developed to support this process, their practical application remains challenging, particularly in understanding how purchasing specialists apply these strategies in practice.

In the Algerian context, organizations operate under specific conditions characterized by economic instability, currency fluctuations, and administrative constraints. These factors significantly affect purchasing decisions and limit the availability of qualified suppliers. As a result, purchasing specialists are often required to adapt their purchasing strategies to cope with these constraints.

Furthermore, the gap between theoretical approaches and real-world practices raises important questions about how supplier choice strategies are actually implemented within industrial firms. It also highlights the need to investigate the strategies used by purchasing specialists and the challenges encountered during the decision-making process within the Algerian industrial sector.

This context leads to the formulation of the following research problem:

Problem Statement

How do purchasing specialists in the Algerian industrial sector select their suppliers, and what strategies, criteria, and contextual challenges shape their decision-making process?

Research Questions

- What supplier selection strategies are adopted by purchasing specialists in the Algerian industrial sector?
- What are the main steps involved in the supplier selection process within industrial organizations?
- What criteria are prioritized by purchasing specialists when selecting suppliers?
- How do purchasing specialists manage the relationship with their suppliers?
- What sourcing strategies (single sourcing or multiple sourcing) are adopted, and for what reasons?

- What challenges do purchasing specialists face in supplier selection within the Algerian context?
- How do economic, regulatory, and organizational factors influence supplier selection strategies and decisions?

Significance of the Study

Supplier selection has become a key issue for organizations seeking to improve their competitiveness and ensure supply chain resilience. In the Algerian industrial sector, where companies face numerous constraints, understanding the supplier selection strategies adopted by purchasing specialists is particularly important.

This study aims to provide a detailed analysis of supplier selection practices within the Algerian industrial sector.

Moreover, this research explores the challenges encountered by purchasing specialists. It also examines how purchasing specialists manage and maintain relationships with suppliers in a complex and uncertain environment.

The findings of this study will contribute to both academic research and managerial practice. They will provide useful insights for organizations aiming to improve their purchasing strategies and will help decision-makers better understand how to optimize supplier selection strategies in similar industrial and emerging market contexts.

Methodology

In order to examine supplier selection strategies within SPA Condor Electronics, this study adopts a qualitative research approach. This method is particularly suitable for understanding complex decision-making processes and exploring the experiences and perspectives of purchasing professionals.

The qualitative approach primarily involves conducting semi-structured interviews with purchasing specialists and relevant stakeholders within the company. These interviews aim to collect detailed information about the supplier selection process, the criteria used, and the challenges faced.

In addition to interviews, this study also relies on a documentary analysis of internal company documents to complement and validate the interview data. This method allows for

a better understanding of formal practices and provides a more comprehensive view of the supplier selection process.

The collected data will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative method that allows the identification of key patterns and themes. NVivo software will be used to support the coding and organization of the data, ensuring a systematic and rigorous analysis.

Through this combined approach, the study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of supplier selection practices and to highlight the gap between theoretical models and real-world applications in the Algerian industrial context.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into three main chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of the research.

The first chapter, the theoretical framework, is divided into two sections. The first section presents a comprehensive literature review on the purchasing function and supplier selection, highlighting key concepts such as supplier evaluation criteria, sourcing strategies, and the strategic role of purchasing in supply chain management. The second section introduces the conceptual framework of the study, identifying the main variables and relationships relevant to supplier selection strategies.

The second chapter, the methodological framework, is also divided into two sections. The first section presents the organizational context, providing an overview of SPA Condor Electronics and its supply chain management practices. The second section explains the qualitative research approach, detailing the data collection process.

The third chapter is dedicated to results analysis and discussion. It begins with the presentation of the results obtained from semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. It also includes a systematic analysis of the data using NVivo, highlighting how supplier selection strategies are defined and implemented by purchasing specialists within the company. Finally, this chapter examines the results of the study and proposes an action plan aimed at improving the effectiveness and consistency of supplier selection practices, while taking into account the challenges identified throughout the study.

CHAPTER I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study by reviewing the main literature related to supplier selection strategies in purchasing management. It aims to clarify the key concepts and theoretical perspectives that explain how purchasing specialists select suppliers within industrial organizations. The chapter also highlights the importance of supplier selection in improving organizational performance and supply chain efficiency. Furthermore, it discusses the main criteria and strategies used in the supplier selection process. To ensure a clear structure, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides a literature review on purchasing management and supplier selection. The second section presents the conceptual framework of the study and the key concepts guiding the analysis of supplier selection strategies in the Algerian industrial sector.

Section 1: Literature Review

In this section, we review previous research related to purchasing management and supplier selection within supply chain management. It provides an overview of the key concepts, theories, and studies that highlight the importance of suppliers and the role of purchasing in organizational performance. The section also examines how scholars have addressed supplier selection strategies, focusing on the criteria and approaches used by purchasing specialists to evaluate and select suppliers. Through this review, the section establishes the theoretical foundation for understanding supplier selection strategies in the industrial sector.

1. Purchasing Function and Supply Management

Purchasing, procurement, and supply management form the foundation of how organizations acquire and manage external resources, each reflecting a different level of scope and strategic importance.

1.1 Defining Purchasing, Procurement, and Supply Management

Purchasing, procurement, and supply management are frequently used interchangeably; however, the literature distinguishes between them in terms of scope and strategic orientation. At its most fundamental level, purchasing refers to the operational process through which organizations identify needs, contact suppliers, negotiate prices, issue purchase orders, and monitor deliveries (Kaufmann, 2002). In this traditional sense, purchasing is associated with day-to-day transactional activities rather than with strategic planning. As Monczka et al. (2015) observe, the purchasing function is primarily concerned with the execution of acquisition decisions, ensuring that the right goods and services are

obtained at the right time and at an acceptable cost. Lysons and Farrington, (2016) similarly describe purchasing as the administrative dimension of supply activity, one that focuses on routine coordination between the buying organization and its suppliers.

While purchasing focuses on individual transactions, procurement takes a more integrated view of how organizations secure the inputs they need, including the evaluation of supply market conditions and the development of sourcing policies (Van Weele, 2014). Cousins, et al. (2008) further distinguish procurement as the organizational function responsible for managing the interface between the firm and its supply markets, encompassing both the tactical execution of purchases and the broader governance of supplier relationships.

Supply management, in turn, represents the most comprehensive and strategically oriented of the three concepts. It encompasses both the operational and strategic dimensions of obtaining materials, services, and capabilities from external sources, while simultaneously contributing to long term organizational performance through integrated supplier relationship management, risk management, and cross functional coordination (Kaufmann, 2002; Monczka et al., 2015). Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (2020) defines supply management as the discipline concerned with securing the external resources an organization requires to achieve its strategic objectives.

Figure 1: purchasing vs procurement vs supply chain

Source: Adapted from Van Weele (2014); Cousins et al. (2008)

1.2 The Role of Purchasing in Industrial Organizations

The role of purchasing in modern industrial organizations extends well beyond the acquisition of raw materials and components. In modern practice, the purchasing function encompasses a wide range of interconnected activities that shape the operational efficiency and strategic positioning of the firm. At the operational level, purchasing managers are responsible for buying, which involves evaluating and selecting suppliers, conducting price negotiations, and coordinating the timely delivery of required inputs. Also, purchasing departments engage in expediting, monitoring outstanding orders and liaising with suppliers to resolve delivery delays before they disrupt production schedules (Monczka et al., 2015).

Beyond these transactional responsibilities, purchasing contributes to inventory management by coordinating material deliveries with production requirements and demand forecasts, which minimize inventory holding costs while ensuring input availability. In many firms, the purchasing function also participates in transportation management, evaluating logistics providers and optimizing inbound freight arrangements (Van Weele, 2014). One of the most strategically significant contributions of the purchasing function is its involvement in make-or-buy decisions through an assessment of whether a product or service should be produced internally or sourced from external suppliers. These decisions require purchasing managers to evaluate supplier capabilities, total cost structures, quality standards, and supply risks, making them central to the firm's broader sourcing strategy (Cousins, et al., 2008).

1.3 Evolution of the Purchasing Function: From Administrative Activity to Strategic Asset

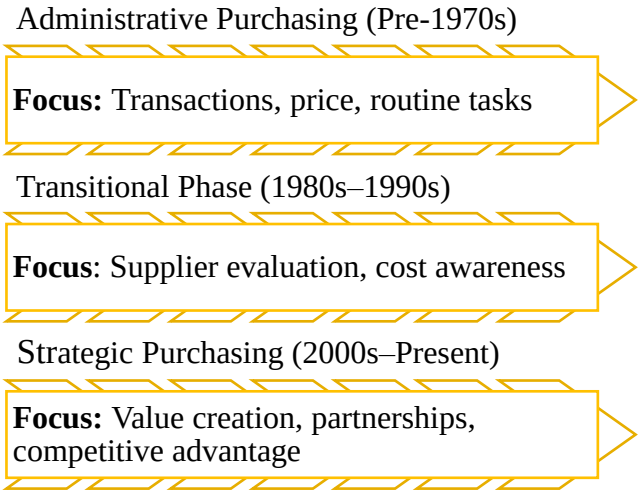
For much of the twentieth century, purchasing was regarded primarily as an administrative function. Its principal objective was to ensure the availability of materials and services required for production while securing them at the lowest possible price. In this traditional model, purchasing staff were limited to processing purchase requisitions, conducting price comparisons among competing suppliers, issuing purchase orders, and monitoring deliveries (Van Weele, 2014). Decision-making was reactive and short-term in orientation, and the function was frequently perceived as a cost centre rather than a source of organizational value. Purchasing departments had limited involvement in broader strategic planning, and their interactions with other organizational functions were minimal (Monczka et al., 2015).

A decisive turning point in the recognition of purchasing's strategic potential came in the wake of the 1973-1974 oil crisis, which exposed the vulnerability of supply chains to

external shocks and prompted organizations to reassess the strategic importance of securing reliable, high quality sources of supply. Throughout the 1980s, influential frameworks began to reshape purchasing strategy. Notably, Kraljic (1983) introduced his portfolio matrix, which classified purchased items by profit impact and supply risk and proposed differentiated sourcing strategies for each category. This framework repositioned purchasing as a discipline capable of contributing to competitive advantage through strategic sourcing decisions.

The 1990s and 2000s brought further transformative pressures. Globalization expanded access to international supply markets but simultaneously increased supply chain complexity and competitive intensity. The widespread adoption of outsourcing strategies meant that firms were sourcing an ever-larger proportion of their value from external suppliers, amplifying the importance of supplier selection and management (Van Weele, 2018). Management philosophies such as Just-in-Time (JIT) and Total Quality Management (TQM) further underscored the critical importance of supplier quality and delivery reliability, driving closer integration between buyers and their supply bases (Monczka et al., 2015). At the same time, advances in information technology—particularly the emergence of enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and electronic procurement platforms—enabled purchasing departments to move beyond routine transaction processing and engage in sophisticated supply market analysis and supplier performance management (Carter et al., 2015). Today, purchasing is increasingly embedded in the firm's strategic planning processes, with purchasing managers participating in cross-functional teams and contributing to decisions about new product development, market entry, and corporate sustainability.

Figure 2: Evolution of purchasing function



Source: Adapted from Van Weele (2014); Monczka et al. (2015)

2. Supplier Relationship Management

Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) is a key element of modern supply chain strategy, focusing on building strong and collaborative supplier partnerships.

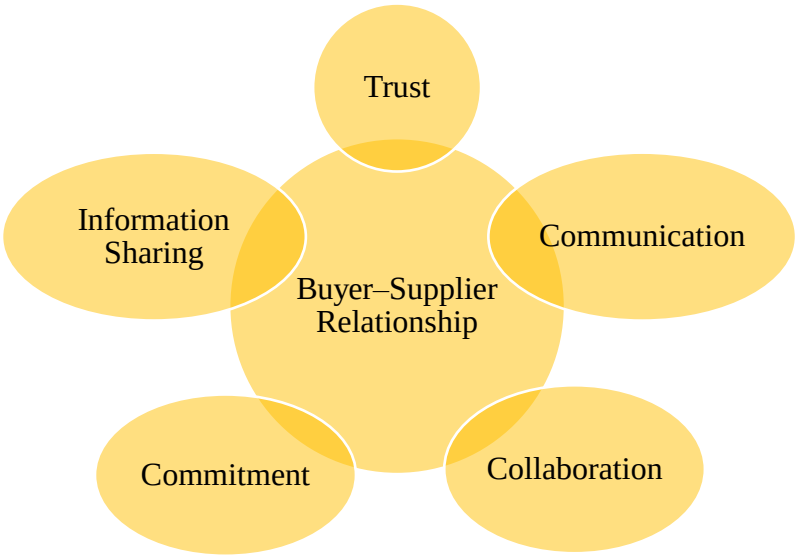
2.1 Concept and Evolution of Supplier Relationship Management

Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) has emerged as a central concept in supply chain management, reflecting the growing recognition that the quality of a firm's relationships with its suppliers is a critical determinant of operational performance and strategic competitiveness. SRM can be broadly defined as a comprehensive approach to managing an organization's interactions with the external firms that supply the products and services it requires, with the aim of improving the efficiency of sourcing processes and strengthening collaboration between the buyer and its supply base (Mettler & Rohner, 2009). The concept is frequently positioned as the supply-side counterpart to Customer Relationship Management (CRM), in that both frameworks seek to build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships that generate value for all parties involved (Mettler & Rohner, 2009). Despite its widespread use, however, there is no universally accepted definition of SRM. Some authors approach SRM from a managerial perspective, emphasizing strategic collaboration, joint planning, and coordinated performance management, while others focus on the enabling role of information and communication technologies in facilitating buyer–supplier interactions (Mettler & Rohner, 2009).

Historically, buyer–supplier relationships were predominantly transactional and adversarial in character. Organizations selected suppliers primarily on the basis of price competition,

maintained limited interaction beyond negotiating contracts and delivery terms, and frequently switched between suppliers in search of lower costs (Monczka et al., 2015). This approach, while straightforward, failed to capture the potential value embedded in closer, more collaborative supplier partnerships. Subsequent developments in business process reengineering and organizational restructuring during the 1990s encouraged firms to rethink their procurement practices and explore more cooperative models of supplier engagement (Mettler & Rohner, 2009). The advent of modern enterprise systems and electronic procurement platforms has since enabled organizations to monitor supplier performance in real time, exchange operational data efficiently, and integrate supplier management processes into broader supply chain systems (Carter et al., 2015; Mettler & Rohner, 2009).

Figure 3: Supplier Relationship Management



Source: created by the author based on the literature review

2.2 Objectives and Dimensions of Effective Supplier Relationships

SRM serves multiple interconnected objectives within the supply chain. Its most immediately visible contribution is to cost reduction: by fostering close coordination and joint cost-reduction initiatives with key suppliers, firms can lower total cost of ownership and improve procurement efficiency (Monczka et al., 2015). Beyond cost, SRM plays a critical role in risk management. By building close monitoring relationships with suppliers and establishing performance evaluation systems, firms are better positioned to identify and respond to supply disruptions, quality failures, and delivery delays before they escalate into significant operational problems (Grondys & Kot, 2025). Close supplier relationships also facilitate the flow of knowledge and innovation across organizational boundaries. Suppliers

who are integrated into the buyer's product development and process improvement activities can contribute technological expertise, ideas, and solutions that enhance product performance and operational efficiency (Carter et al., 2015; Cousins, et al., 2008).

The effectiveness of supplier relationships depends on a number of relational dimensions that have been extensively studied in the literature. Trust and commitment are widely identified as foundational elements: trust reduces transaction costs by lowering the need for extensive formal monitoring mechanisms, while commitment signals a willingness to invest in the relationship over the long term, encouraging reciprocal cooperation and information sharing (Monczka et al., 2015; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Effective communication and timely information sharing are equally essential, enabling buyers and suppliers to coordinate activities, anticipate disruptions, and respond flexibly to changing demand conditions (Grondys, & Kot, 2025). At a structural level, coordination and collaboration enable firms and their suppliers to function as integrated value-creating systems rather than as independent entities engaged in arm's-length transactions. Taken together, these relational dimensions define the quality of buyer–supplier partnerships and ultimately determine the extent to which SRM delivers sustainable competitive advantage (Cousins, et al., 2008; Monczka et al., 2015).

3. Supplier Selection

Supplier selection plays a critical role in supply chain management, as it determines the quality, cost, and reliability of the resources organizations depend on.

3.1 Concept, Importance, and Process of Supplier Selection

Supplier selection is universally recognized as one of the most consequential decisions in the purchasing and supply management process. It can be defined as the process through which organizations identify, evaluate, and choose suppliers capable of providing the required materials, products, or services while satisfying operational and strategic requirements (Monczka et al., 2015). The process typically involves assessing potential suppliers against a defined set of criteria—such as price, quality performance, delivery reliability, technological capability, and financial stability—before awarding a contract to the candidate or candidates that best meet the organization's needs (De Boer et al., 2001). Research by Monczka et al. (2015) indicates that selecting appropriate suppliers and managing their involvement effectively can reduce material costs and product development

time by approximately 20%, while simultaneously improving material quality by a comparable margin.

Supplier selection influences three primary dimensions of organizational performance: cost, quality, and supply reliability. With respect to cost, the choice of supplier directly determines the price paid for materials and services, and by extension, the firm's cost structure and profit margins. Beyond the purchase price, supplier selection affects the total cost of ownership—a broader measure that encompasses inspection costs, rework costs, inventory holding costs, and the costs of supply disruptions (Ellram & Carr, 1994). Regarding quality, the performance of purchased inputs is a direct determinant of the quality of finished products and, ultimately, of customer satisfaction. Suppliers that consistently deliver to specification reduce defect rates and rework requirements, supporting the buyer's quality management objectives (Dickson, 1966; Stević, 2017). Unreliable suppliers generate costly inventory buffers, production delays, and expediting costs that undermine operational efficiency (Grondys, & Kot, 2025).

The supplier evaluation process itself can be conceptualized as a multi-stage sequence of activities. De Boer et al. (2001) propose a widely cited four-stage model consisting of problem formulation, criteria formulation, qualification, and the final selection decision. In the problem formulation stage, the purchasing organization defines its requirements and articulates the characteristics of an ideal supplier. In the criteria formulation stage, the key evaluation dimensions are identified and, weighted according to their relative importance when appropriate. During qualification, the initial pool of candidate suppliers is screened against minimum threshold requirements to produce a manageable shortlist. In the final selection stage, the shortlisted suppliers are systematically compared and a decision is reached using a method appropriate to the complexity and strategic importance of the purchase.

Figure 4: Supplier Selection Process

source: created by the author

3.2 Supplier Selection Criteria: From Dickson's Framework to Contemporary Practice

The criteria used to evaluate and select suppliers have been a central concern in the purchasing literature for over five decades. The foundational contribution in this domain is the study by Dickson (1966), who surveyed approximately 300 purchasing managers across U.S. manufacturing and commercial organizations to identify the factors they considered important in vendor selection. By asking respondents to rate 23 supplier attributes on a four-point importance scale, Dickson established that quality, delivery, and performance history were the most critical evaluation criteria, while net price ranked only eighth. This finding challenged the prevailing assumption—widespread in both practice and early academic thinking—that cost is the single dominant criterion in purchasing decisions. Dickson's 23-criterion framework became the reference point for all subsequent empirical and theoretical work on supplier evaluation, and its influence remains visible in contemporary multi-criteria decision-making models (Taherdoost & Brard, 2019).

Building on this foundational work, Taherdoost and Brard (2019) provide a comprehensive review of supplier selection criteria and methods in their study published in Procedia Manufacturing. Drawing on an extensive literature review, the authors group selection criteria into quantitative attributes—such as price, delivery lead time, production capacity, and defect rates—and qualitative attributes—such as communication effectiveness, supplier reputation, management quality, and cultural fit—. Their review confirms that quality, price, delivery, and capacity remain the dominant criteria across industries, while noting that a growing number of organizations are incorporating additional dimensions such as financial stability, flexibility, and innovation capability into their evaluation frameworks. Taherdoost and Brard (2019) also find that despite the availability of sophisticated multi-criteria

decision-making tools such as the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), TOPSIS, and VIKOR, many purchasing managers in industrial firms—particularly in developing economy contexts—continue to rely on experience-based, informal approaches when selecting suppliers.

More recently, Ferreira and Silva (2022), in their systematic literature review of supplier selection in SMEs published in Procedia Computer Science, confirm that quality, delivery compliance, and price remain the three most cited criteria across industries and firm sizes. Their review additionally identifies supplier reputation, geographic location, and performance history as the next most important factors. Importantly, Ferreira and Silva (2022) also distinguish six purchasing strategies that inform how firms approach supplier evaluation and selection: cost reduction, risk management, global sourcing, total quality management, sustainability management, and supplier management. The authors argue that effective strategic purchasing enables firms to negotiate better terms, reduce lead times, achieve logistics optimization, and improve their overall competitive positioning.

3.3 Complexity and Strategic Implications of Supplier Selection

Despite the existence of structured models and evaluation frameworks, supplier selection remains a complex and inherently challenging decision-making task. The complexity arises primarily from the multi-criteria nature of the problem: purchasing managers must simultaneously evaluate suppliers across multiple, often competing dimensions—cost, quality, delivery, innovation, sustainability, financial stability—without a single dominant metric that can resolve all trade-offs (Tahriri, et al., 2008). The lowest-cost supplier may not offer the best quality; the most technologically advanced supplier may lack the financial stability required for a long-term partnership; a reliable domestic supplier may be unable to match the cost advantages of an international competitor.

Information asymmetry represents a further dimension of complexity. Purchasing organizations frequently have incomplete or unreliable information about potential suppliers, particularly when dealing with new vendors or suppliers operating in unfamiliar geographic markets. Supplier-provided data may be overstated or difficult to verify independently (Yildiz, & Yayla, 2015). These challenges are amplified in contexts such as Algeria, where, as Harouache et al. (2024) confirm in their empirical study of the Algerian construction industry, inaccurate technical specifications, poor supplier coordination, and the delivery of inferior materials represent common and recurring procurement failures.

Their survey of 237 Algerian construction industry professionals—using PLS path analysis—confirms that supplier interface failures are among the most critical barriers to effective supply chain management in the Algerian context, a finding that this study extends to the broader industrial sector.

4. Supplier Selection Strategies

Supplier selection strategies are not only about choosing individual suppliers, but also about defining how organizations structure and manage their overall supply base in line with their strategic objectives.

4.1 Strategic Sourcing Approaches and Supplier Base Strategies

Supplier selection strategies encompass the broader frameworks and principles that guide how organizations structure their supply bases and make sourcing decisions at both the operational and strategic levels. These strategies reflect the organization's competitive priorities, risk tolerance, and view of the supplier relationship, and they must be aligned with the overall supply chain strategy to deliver maximum value. One of the most fundamental strategic choices concerns the number of suppliers engaged for a given category of goods or services. Single sourcing concentrates all purchases with a single supplier, enabling the development of deep, collaborative relationships characterized by mutual investment, joint problem-solving, and long-term alignment of interests. However, single-source arrangements expose the buying organization to significant supply risk if the supplier experiences a disruption. Multiple sourcing, by contrast, distributes orders across several suppliers, providing supply resilience and preserving competitive pressure, but may limit the depth of individual supplier partnerships and increase coordination complexity (Monczka et al., 2015).

The strategic importance of this choice is underscored by the findings of Grondys and Kot 2025), who examine the relationship between global supply chain complexity and firm performance in their empirical study published in Engineering Management in Production and Services. Using statistical analysis of survey data from industrial firms, Grondys and Kot 2025) find that an increase in the number of international supply chain partners significantly elevates coordination costs and supply continuity risks, ultimately undermining firm performance when not managed strategically. Their study highlights that effective supplier relationship management—built on trust, structured communication, and collaborative problem-solving—is a critical mechanism for mitigating the negative effects

of supply chain complexity. For Algerian industrial firms, which are often compelled to source internationally due to the limited availability of qualified domestic suppliers, these findings have direct practical implications: the strategic management of supplier relationships is not merely a best-practice recommendation but a competitive necessity.

A second fundamental strategic dimension concerns the degree of centralization in purchasing decisions. Centralized sourcing consolidates purchasing authority at the organizational headquarters or a dedicated procurement unit, enabling volume aggregation, standardized processes, and stronger negotiating leverage with suppliers. Decentralized sourcing, in contrast, distributes procurement authority to individual business units or facilities, enabling greater responsiveness to local requirements and faster decision-making. Many large organizations adopt hybrid models that centralize strategic purchasing decisions—such as supplier selection and contract negotiation for high-value or high-risk categories—while delegating operational procurement activities to local units (Cousins, et al., 2008; Van Weele, 2014).

Table 1: single sourcing vs multiple sourcing

Aspect	Single Sourcing	Multiple Sourcing
Managerial Logic	Preference for building a strong relationship with one trusted supplier	Preference for reducing dependency by working with several suppliers
Main Objective	Stability, trust, and long-term collaboration	Risk reduction and supply security
Risk Management	High dependency on one supplier	Diversification reduces supply disruption risk
Relationship with Suppliers	Strong partnership and communication	More transactional and less intensive relationships
Decision Criteria	Emphasis on reliability and consistency	Emphasis on flexibility and availability
Flexibility	Limited in case of disruption	High flexibility to switch between suppliers
Complexity of Management	Easier to manage	More complex coordination
Adaptation to Algerian Context	Used when a reliable supplier is available	Used when supply uncertainty or market constraints exist

Typical Use by Managers	Strategic or critical purchases	Routine or risk-sensitive purchases

Source: made by the author based on the literature review

4.2 Supplier Segmentation and the Kraljic Portfolio Matrix

Beyond the number of suppliers engaged, purchasing managers must also make strategic decisions about how to differentiate their approach to managing different types of suppliers. Supplier segmentation provides a framework for allocating management attention and resources proportionately. The most widely used segmentation framework is Kraljic's (1983) portfolio matrix, which classifies purchases into four categories—routine, leverage, bottleneck, and strategic—and prescribes differentiated sourcing strategies for each. Routine items, characterized by low spend and low supply risk, are best managed through automated, low-cost procurement processes. Leverage items, with high spend but limited supply risk, offer opportunities for competitive tendering and volume aggregation. Bottleneck items, where supply risk is high despite modest spend, require contingency planning and the maintenance of safety stocks. Strategic items, characterized by both high spend and high supply risk, demand the deepest forms of buyer–supplier collaboration, including long-term agreements and joint development programs.

Saputro et al. (2022) further develop this framework in their comprehensive literature review published in Computers & Industrial Engineering. Building on the Kraljic matrix, Saputro et al. (2022) formalize a four-dimensional supplier selection framework encompassing sourcing strategy, decision scope, decision environment, and selection criteria. Their review of the supplier selection literature demonstrates that items of high purchasing importance require holistic evaluation across a broad set of qualitative and quantitative criteria, while items characterized by high supply complexity demand integrated decision-making approaches that account for uncertainty and risk. The authors further show that hybrid multi-criteria decision-making methods—combining quantitative techniques such as linear programming with qualitative approaches such as AHP—are the most effective for selecting suppliers of strategic and bottleneck items. Despite the normative value of this framework, Saputro et al. (2022) acknowledge that its empirical validation remains limited, particularly in public procurement and emerging economy contexts.

5. Supplier Selection in the Algerian Industrial Sector

The Algerian industrial context presents a unique combination of structural, regulatory, and market-specific factors that significantly influence purchasing practices and supplier selection decisions.

5.1 Characteristics of the Algerian Industrial Environment

The Algerian industrial sector constitutes a complex and distinctive operational environment that shapes how purchasing managers approach supplier selection and supply chain management. Algeria's economy remains heavily oriented around hydrocarbons, with the oil and gas sector accounting for approximately 40–45 percent of GDP and nearly 98 percent of export revenues (U.S. Department of State, 2014). Non-hydrocarbon manufacturing has historically been underdeveloped, a legacy of the state-led industrialization model pursued in the decades following independence, which gave rise to a large public enterprise sector dependent on centralized management and protected from competitive market pressures (Begga, & Merghit, 2014). Many Algerian industrial firms remain heavily dependent on imported raw materials, components, and production equipment, as the domestic supply market is insufficiently developed to meet their technical and quality requirements (Lachache, 2020). This import dependency creates significant exposure to foreign exchange volatility, customs delays, and international supply chain disruptions, all of which complicate the supplier selection and management task.

The regulatory environment adds a further layer of complexity to purchasing decisions in Algeria. Public procurement is governed by Presidential Decree N°15-247 of 2015, which mandates competitive or restricted tendering procedures for public entities and state-owned enterprises (Boukider, 2020). While this framework promotes formal transparency, it has been criticized for its tendency to favour the lowest-cost bidder over the highest-value offer, thereby constraining the ability of purchasing managers to apply holistic evaluation criteria that incorporate quality, reliability, and strategic fit (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2024). The broader regulatory environment is characterized by frequent regulatory changes, bureaucratic complexity, and inconsistent enforcement, which raise transaction costs and create uncertainty for both buyers and suppliers (U.S. Department of State, 2024).

5.2 Purchasing Challenges and Constraints in Algeria

Purchasing managers in the Algerian industrial sector face a distinct set of challenges that significantly constrain their ability to apply best-practice supplier selection frameworks. The

most fundamental of these is the limited availability of qualified domestic suppliers. In many product categories, the number of local vendors capable of meeting the technical specifications, quality standards, and delivery requirements of industrial buyers is insufficient to support competitive tendering, forcing firms to rely on a small pool of known suppliers or to source from international markets despite the associated costs and risks (Lachache, 2020). This constraint aligns with the wider pattern documented by Grondys and Kot 2025), who show that firms compelled to engage a larger number of international partners face heightened coordination complexity and supply disruption risk—a dynamic directly observable in the Algerian industrial context.

The empirical work of Harouache et al. (2024) on supply chain management in the Algerian construction sector provides the most direct evidence of the purchasing challenges prevalent in Algeria. Based on a survey of 237 construction industry professionals and PLS path analysis, their study identifies supplier coordination failures, inaccurate technical specifications, lack of supplier commitment, and inferior material quality as the primary supply chain barriers in the Algerian context. These findings are consistent with the broader literature on developing-economy supply chains, which highlights limited information transparency, weak contract enforcement mechanisms, and a cultural preference for short-term, transaction-oriented dealings as persistent obstacles to the development of long-term collaborative buyer–supplier relationships (Harouache et al., 2024; Lachache, 2020). Together, these structural and institutional barriers mean that purchasing managers in Algeria must often make supplier selection decisions under conditions of considerable uncertainty, with limited information, restricted supplier options, and a regulatory environment that does not always reward best-value procurement over lowest-price compliance.

6. Limitations of Prior Studies

Despite the breadth of the supplier selection literature, important gaps remain that the present study seeks to address. The foundational work of Dickson (1966) remains a cornerstone of the field, but its U.S.-centric sample and descriptive nature limit its transferability to institutional contexts such as Algeria, where procurement decisions are shaped by different regulatory frameworks, informal practices, and supply market conditions. The four-stage model proposed by De Boer et al. (2001) provides a useful analytical scaffold but was built on a review of academic publications that largely excludes informal and trust-based selection processes prevalent in emerging markets. Similarly, the review by Taherdoost and Brard

(2019), while comprehensive in its treatment of criteria and methods, does not empirically validate its findings in a developing-country setting.

The strategic purchasing typology developed by Ferreira and Silva (2022) offers valuable comparative benchmarks but focuses on SMEs in developed-economy contexts, limiting its direct applicability to Algerian public and industrial enterprises operating under regulatory constraints. The normative framework of Saputro et al. (2022), while theoretically rigorous, acknowledges the absence of empirical validation in public procurement and emerging economy contexts. Finally, the study by Grondys and Kot (2025), conducted in a European context, confirms the performance costs of supply chain complexity, but does not address the specific institutional and regulatory barriers that shape buyer–supplier relationships in Algeria. The study grounded in Algerian empirical data—(Harouache et al., 2024)—is restricted to the construction sector and does not examine the decision-making processes of purchasing specialists in industrial manufacturing settings. The present study responds to this cumulative gap by investigating, through qualitative empirical inquiry, the supplier selection strategies adopted by purchasing specialists in the Algerian industrial sector.

The following table synthesizes the seven key studies reviewed in this section, presenting their methodological approaches, principal findings, limitations, and their specific relevance to the present research.

Table 2: Synthesis of Previous Studies on Supplier Selection Strategies

Author(s) & Reference	**Methodology**	**Main Findings**	**Limitations**	**Relevance to This Study**
Dickson, G. W. (1966). An analysis of vendor selection systems and decisions.	Quantitative survey administered to approximately 300 purchasing managers in U.S. manufacturing and commercial organizations. Respondents rated 23 vendor selection factors on	Quality, delivery, and performance history were identified as the most critical criteria. Net price ranked only eighth, challenging the prevailing assumption that cost dominates all purchasing decisions. Established that supplier selection is inherently a multi-criteria problem.	Sample confined to U.S. manufacturing firms in the 1960s, limiting applicability to other cultural, economic, and institutional contexts. The criteria list is descriptive and does not prescribe	Provides the foundational set of 23 criteria against which the selection practices of Algerian purchasing specialists are compared in this study.

Author(s) & Reference	Methodology	Main Findings	Limitations	Relevance to This Study
	a 4-point importance scale.		a weighting methodology or a decision-making model.	
De Boer, L., Labro, E., & Morlacchi, P. (2001). A review of methods supporting supplier selection.	Systematic literature review of decision-support methods for supplier selection, based on an extensive search of academic publications. A classification framework covering four purchasing situations and four process stages was applied.	Proposed a four-stage supplier selection model: (1) problem formulation, (2) criteria formulation, (3) pre-qualification, and (4) final choice. Argued that appropriate decision methods depend on the complexity and strategic importance of the purchase, and that no single method suits all situations.	Review is confined to academic publications, excluding practitioner knowledge and informal processes. Does not address relationship-driven or trust-based selection prevalent in emerging market contexts.	The four-stage process model structures this study's analysis of how Algerian purchasing specialists organize their supplier selection decisions in practice.
Taherdoost, H., & Brard, A. (2019). Analyzing the process of supplier selection criteria and methods.	Literature review combined with classification analysis of supplier selection criteria and methods. Criteria were grouped into quantitative and qualitative categories; methods were reviewed across MCDM families.	Identified quality, price, delivery, capacity, and communication as the dominant criteria in industrial supplier selection. Found that structured MCDM approaches are increasingly favored over single-criterion methods, but that practitioners in many firms continue to rely on experience-based informal decisions,	The review is descriptive and does not include primary empirical validation in a specific country or sector. Developing-country purchasing environments are not explicitly modelled.	Confirms the multi-criteria complexity of supplier selection and establishes that informal, experience-based practices often prevail in contexts similar to Algeria's industrial sector.

Author(s) & Reference	Methodology	Main Findings	Limitations	Relevance to This Study
		particularly in emerging market contexts.		
Ferreira, L. M. D. F., & Silva, C. (2022). Supplier selection and procurement in SMEs: insights from the literature on key criteria and purchasing strategies.	Systematic literature review using content analysis of peer-reviewed articles on supplier selection in SMEs. Six dominant purchasing strategies and the most frequently cited selection criteria were identified.	The six most cited criteria are: quality, delivery compliance, price/cost, supplier reputation, geographic location, and performance history. Six purchasing strategies were identified: cost reduction, risk management, global sourcing, TQM, sustainability, and supplier management. Strategic purchasing enables firms to negotiate better terms, reduce lead times, and improve competitiveness.	Analysis is limited to SME contexts; criteria rankings may differ substantially in large industrial enterprises or public procurement settings. Developing-country environments are not explicitly addressed.	Provides a structured catalogue of purchasing strategies against which the approaches of Algerian industrial purchasing specialists can be directly compared in this study.
Saputro, J. A., Figueira, G., & Almada-Lobo, B. (2022). A comprehensive framework and literature review of supplier selection under different purchasing strategies.	Comprehensive literature review of supplier selection research organized around four dimensions: sourcing strategy, decision scope, decision environment, and selection criteria. The Kraljic Portfolio Matrix	Supplier selection for items of high purchasing importance requires holistic multi-criteria evaluation. Items with high supply complexity require integrated decision-making approaches combining qualitative and quantitative factors. Hybrid MCDM methods are the most	The framework remains largely normative with limited empirical validation in real organizational settings. Public procurement and emerging economy contexts are not adequately covered.	Provides a theoretical lens for classifying the sourcing strategies observed among Algerian purchasing specialists, particularly regarding

Author(s) & Reference	Methodology	Main Findings	Limitations	Relevance to This Study
	was used as a structuring tool.	effective for strategic items. Single vs. multiple sourcing choices must be aligned with supply risk levels.		single versus multiple sourcing and risk-driven decisions.
Harouache, A., Abkar, M. M. A., Gamil, Y., Al-Shameri, A. S. A., & Gabir, A. A. M. (2024). Influence of supply chain management on the sustainable construction industry in Algeria.	Quantitative survey using a 61-item Likert-scale questionnaire administered online to 237 managers, supervisors, executives, and suppliers in Algerian construction companies. PLS path analysis using SmartPLS.	Confirmed a positive relationship between traditional supply chain management practices—including purchasing and supplier coordination—and sustainable construction outcomes in Algeria. Identified supplier coordination failures, inaccurate technical specifications, lack of supplier commitment, and inferior materials as the primary procurement challenges in the Algerian context.	Restricted to the construction sector; findings may not transfer directly to heavy industry or manufacturing. Does not examine the purchasing manager's decision-making process or supplier selection criteria in depth.	The only recent empirical study on supply chain management in Algeria, providing direct evidence of purchasing challenges that contextualize this study's focus on supplier selection in the Algerian industrial sector.
Grondys, K., & Kot, M. (2025). Impact of global supply chain complexity on the individual performance outcome.	Empirical quantitative study examining the relationship between global supply chain complexity—measured by the number of international	An increase in global supply chain complexity, particularly through a higher number of international suppliers, creates significant risks to supply continuity, increases coordination costs, and can	Study is conducted in a European context and may not fully reflect the institutional and regulatory barriers that shape buyer–supplier relationships in developing	Supports the study's argument that Algerian industrial firms, constrained by a limited domestic supply base

Author(s) & Reference	Methodology	Main Findings	Limitations	Relevance to This Study
	partners—and firm performance outcomes. Statistical analysis of survey data from industrial firms.	undermine firm performance. Effective supplier relationship management mitigates these effects by building trust, improving communication, and enabling joint problem-solving.	economies such as Algeria.	and forced into international sourcing, face heightened supply chain complexity that demands strategic supplier selection and relationship management.

Source: Compiled by the author

The literature on supplier selection provides strong theoretical and methodological foundations, but it remains limited in its applicability to the Algerian context. Most prior studies are based on developed economies, focus on formal and structured selection models, and lack empirical validation in emerging markets. Additionally, existing research in Algeria is sector-specific and does not explore the role of purchasing specialists in industrial settings. Therefore, a clear gap exists in understanding how supplier selection strategies are actually implemented in the Algerian industrial sector, particularly through an empirical, qualitative perspective.

Section 2: Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework delineates the theoretical and empirical foundations of supplier selection strategies adopted by purchasing specialists in the Algerian industrial sector. It is structured around three interconnected domains—supplier selection strategies, purchasing specialists, and the Algerian industrial sector—which together provide a coherent analytical lens for understanding how supplier selection decisions are formulated and implemented.

1. Supplier Selection Strategies

Supplier selection and sourcing strategies constitute a foundational pillar of modern purchasing and supply chain management, shaping both operational efficiency and long-term competitive advantage.

1.1 Conceptualisation and Strategic Importance of Supplier Selection

Supplier selection is widely recognised as one of the most consequential decisions in the purchasing and supply management process. De Boer et al. (2001) define it as the process by which firms identify, evaluate, and contract with suppliers, involving a significant portion of the firm's financial resources in pursuit of reduced procurement risk, maximum value, and long-term buyer–supplier relationships. This definition underscores both the financial and relational stakes involved, linking the supplier selection decision to broader strategic imperatives of risk management and value creation.

The strategic importance of supplier selection has been extensively documented in the recent literature. Nguyen et al. (2024) demonstrate that effective supplier selection and order allocation directly affect total procurement cost, delivery reliability, and supply chain resilience. At the firm level, Monczka et al. (2015) estimate that selecting appropriate suppliers and managing their involvement can reduce material costs and product development time by approximately 20%, while simultaneously improving material quality by a similar margin. More recently, Govindan et al. (2023) have argued that sustainable collaboration between manufacturers and suppliers has emerged as a crucial supply chain decision for increasing business efficiency, widening the scope of supplier selection beyond traditional cost-quality trade-offs.

This inherent complexity makes supplier selection not merely an operational task but a strategic activity that shapes the competitive positioning of the purchasing organisation. In the industrial context, where purchased materials may constitute 60–80% of total product cost Monczka et al. (2015), the strategic weight of each supplier selection decision is particularly pronounced.

1.2 Supplier Selection Criteria

The literature on supplier selection criteria is extensive and has evolved significantly over the past six decades. In a pioneering contribution, Dickson (1966) identified 23 supplier evaluation criteria, among which quality, delivery, and performance history were ranked most highly. This foundational work established a template that subsequent researchers have refined and extended. Ellram and Carr (1994) introduced a broader typology encompassing financial aspects, organisational culture, technological capability, and strategic alignment. These categories recognised that effective supplier evaluation requires compatibility not only on measurable indicators but also on relational and strategic dimensions.

Systematic reviews consistently identify quality, cost, and delivery as the three most frequently cited criteria in supplier selection decisions (Yildiz, & Yayla, 2015). A comprehensive review by Ferreira and Silva (2022) further demonstrates that in small and medium-sized industrial firms, criteria related to lead time reduction and logistical cost optimisation carry particular weight, and must be aligned with the firm's purchasing strategy.

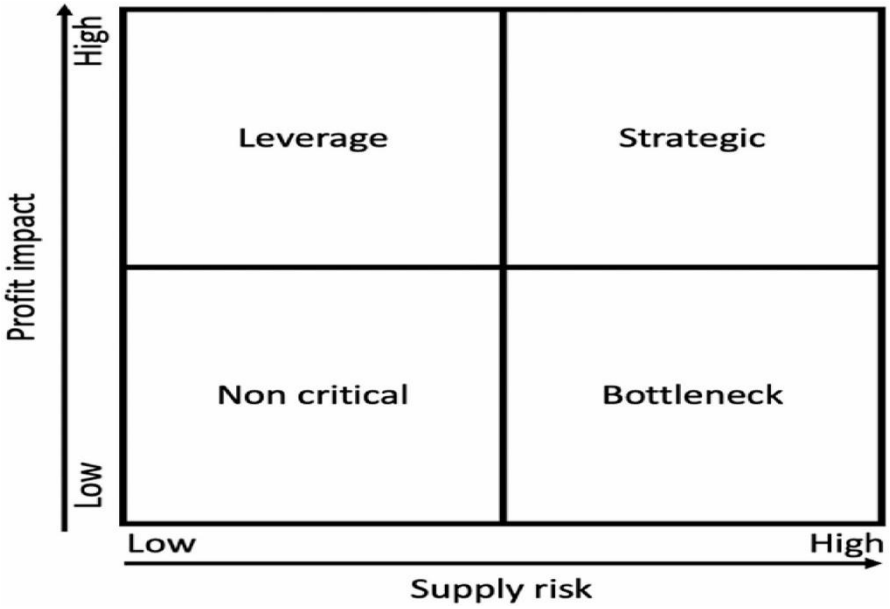
Of particular note is the growing prominence of sustainability criteria in supplier evaluation frameworks. Govindan et al. (2023) propose that sustainable supplier selection should integrate economic, environmental, and social key performance indicators (KPIs) within a unified evaluation model, arguing that this triple-bottom-line perspective is now indispensable for competitive supply chains. A comprehensive literature review by Karakoç et al. (2023) covering 101 studies published between 2018 and 2022 confirms that the incorporation of environmental and social criteria has become increasingly mainstream in supplier selection research, with TOPSIS, AHP, and VIKOR emerging as the most frequently applied methods in sustainable supplier selection studies.

1.3 Sourcing Strategies: Single vs. Multiple Sourcing and Portfolio Approaches

The choice between single sourcing and multiple sourcing constitutes one of the most fundamental strategic decisions. Single sourcing concentrates all purchases of a given item with a single supplier, enabling deeper collaboration, volume leverage, and relationship investment; multiple sourcing distributes orders across two or more suppliers, enhancing supply security and price competition but potentially diluting relationship depth (Monczka et al., 2015).

Kraljic's (1983) portfolio matrix remains the most widely cited framework for differentiating sourcing strategies by item type, classifying purchases into four categories—routine, leverage, bottleneck, and strategic—each of which calls for a distinct approach to supplier selection and relationship management. More recent research has extended this portfolio logic by incorporating supply chain risk and sustainability dimensions. Ferreira and Silva (2022) demonstrate that small and medium industrial firms can successfully apply prioritised portfolio-driven criteria to segment their supplier base and align selection decisions with strategic priorities. Govindan et al. (2023) further emphasise that the sourcing strategy choice should explicitly incorporate sustainability objectives, particularly as regulatory pressures compel firms to extend environmental accountability across their supply chains.

Figure 5: Kraljic Matrix for Supplier Segmentation



Source: Corsini et al. (2024)

2. Purchasing Specialists

The role of the purchasing specialist has evolved into a central element of organisational performance, directly influencing supplier selection decisions and overall supply chain effectiveness.

2.1 Definition and Evolution of the Purchasing Specialist Role

The purchasing specialist—variously referred to in the literature as the procurement manager, buyer, or purchasing professional—is the organisational actor responsible for executing sourcing decisions and managing external supplier relationships on behalf of the firm. Van Weele (2005) provides a foundational definition of purchasing as the management of a company's external resources in order to ensure the supply of all goods, services, capabilities, and knowledge necessary for running, maintaining, and managing its primary and support activities under the best possible conditions. Within this definition, the purchasing specialist is the key agent through whom this external interface is managed.

The role of the purchasing specialist has undergone a fundamental transformation over the past four decades. Prior to the 1980s, purchasing was widely regarded as a clerical function with limited strategic scope. The emergence of supply chain management thinking in the 1990s, the globalisation of supply markets, and the adoption of lean and just-in-time

manufacturing philosophies collectively elevated the strategic importance of the purchasing function (Bals et al., 2019). Today, the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (2020) defines the purchasing and supply management function as a strategic business management activity that ensures identification, sourcing, access, and management of the external resources an organisation needs to fulfil its strategic objectives. This repositioning reflects a fundamental shift in how organisations understand the contributions of the purchasing specialist.

2.2 Decision-Making Behaviour in Supplier Selection

The purchasing specialist's decision-making in supplier selection is influenced by a complex interplay of individual, organisational, and contextual factors. At the individual level, prior professional experience and supply market knowledge shape the specialist's cognitive repertoire for evaluating suppliers (Bals et al., 2019). At the organisational level, purchasing policy, budget constraints, cross-functional involvement, and the degree of formalisation of the supplier evaluation process all condition how selection decisions are made Carr and Pearson (2002). At the contextual level, market conditions, regulatory requirements, and supplier availability define the choice set within which the specialist operates.

In developing country and emerging market contexts, relational and informal factors play an important additional role in shaping supplier selection behaviour. Harouache et al. (2024), in their study of the Algerian construction industry, confirm that trust, personal networks, and informal referrals constitute important complements to formal evaluation criteria in supplier selection, particularly in market environments where information asymmetry is high and formal contracting institutions are less developed.

2.3 Strategic vs. Operational Purchasing

Operational purchasing encompasses the day-to-day transactional activities of the specialist placing orders, processing invoices, expediting deliveries, and resolving routine supplier disputes. Strategic purchasing, by contrast, involves integrating the purchasing function into the firm's long-term planning process, developing sourcing strategies, building supplier portfolios, and aligning external resource management with the organisation's competitive objectives (Ellram & Carr, 1994).

Empirically, Carr and Pearson (2002) demonstrate that strategic purchasing orientation has a significant positive impact on firm financial performance across both large and small enterprises. Ferreira and Silva (2022) further show that even in SME contexts, the adoption

of a strategically informed approach to supplier selection yields measurable improvements in procurement outcomes. These findings frame the present study's interest in the degree to which purchasing specialists in Algerian industrial firms operate at a strategic or operational level, and how this positioning shapes their supplier selection strategies.

3. The Algerian Industrial Sector

The Algerian industrial landscape provides a critical contextual foundation for understanding how purchasing practices and supplier selection decisions are shaped in practice.

3.1 Overview and Structural Characteristics

Algeria is the largest country in Africa by land area and the third-largest Arab economy (World Bank, 2024). Its industrial sector has historically been shaped by the country's deep dependence on hydrocarbon revenues, which accounted for approximately 83% of total exports and 47% of budget revenues between 2019 and 2023 (World Bank, 2024). This structural configuration has profoundly constrained the development of a diversified and internationally competitive manufacturing base, leaving the non-hydrocarbon industrial sector relatively underdeveloped relative to the country's economic size.

The roots of Algeria's industrial sector lie in the post-independence era of the 1960s and 1970s, when the government pursued an ambitious state-led industrialisation strategy centred on heavy industries including steel, chemicals, machinery, and textiles. This model produced a large network of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that dominated manufacturing activity but were characterised by technological obsolescence, poor efficiency, and heavy dependence on public subsidies (Begga, & Merghit, 2014). The structural adjustment programmes of the 1990s forced a partial reconfiguration of this model through trade liberalisation, the lifting of state monopolies, and the introduction of privatisation policies, yet the fundamental dependence on hydrocarbon revenues persisted.

Recent years have seen a gradual, if still limited, shift toward economic diversification. According to the World Bank (2024), non-hydrocarbon exports tripled between 2017 and 2023 to reach $5.1 billion, with key products including fertilisers, steel products, and cement—though this total represented only 2% of GDP, underscoring the continued dominance of hydrocarbons. Algeria's economic growth reached 4.2% in 2023, supported by the hydrocarbon sector, industry, construction, and services (African Development Bank, 2024). The promulgation of the 2022 Investment Law, the 2023 Banking and Monetary Law,

and Algeria's accession to the African Continental Free Trade Area in 2024 signal a governmental commitment to fostering a more diversified, private-sector-led economy, though significant structural impediments remain (World Bank, 2024).

3.2 Purchasing Practices in Algerian Industrial Firms

Purchasing practices in Algerian industrial firms are shaped by the dual structure of the national economy, which encompasses a large public enterprise sector governed by formal procurement regulations and a growing private sector characterised by more flexible but less formalised purchasing practices. In the public sector, procurement is governed by Presidential Decree N°15-247 of September 2015, which mandates that government institutions and state-owned enterprises procure goods and services through competitive or restricted tenders, ensuring transparency and equal treatment of bidders (Boukider, 2020). While this framework promotes procedural compliance, it has been widely criticised for prioritising the lowest-cost bidder over the best-value bidder, systematically disadvantaging suppliers that offer superior quality, innovation, or long-term operational efficiency (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2024).

In the private sector, purchasing practices tend to be less formalised and more relationship-driven. Smaller private firms often rely on personal networks, informal referrals, and direct negotiations with known suppliers rather than structured competitive processes. Harouache et al. (2024), in their study of the Algerian construction industry, confirm that procurement in this sector faces significant constraints related to limited supplier availability and higher costs for specialised materials, and that personal trust and relational proximity constitute important heuristics through which purchasing managers navigate an imperfect supply market.

This duality between formal regulatory compliance in the public sector and informal relationship-based practices in the private sector constitutes a defining contextual feature of purchasing management in Algeria.

3.3 Regulatory and Institutional Environment

The regulatory environment in Algeria is frequently cited as one of the most significant structural constraints on effective procurement. Laws and regulations are known to shift frequently and to be applied unevenly, raising perceptions of commercial risk and creating uncertainty for both buyers and suppliers (U.S. Department of State, 2024). The public procurement regulatory framework has undergone multiple major overhauls since

independence, creating instability and inconsistency in the legal environment governing purchasing decisions. This regulatory volatility constrains the purchasing specialist's ability to develop stable, long-term supplier relationships anchored in predictable contractual frameworks.

Payment delays represent a particularly acute challenge in the Algerian procurement landscape. Algeria's financial regulations, currency controls, and the centralised role of state-owned banks in commercial transactions combine to produce systematic delays in the settlement of supplier invoices, particularly for transactions involving foreign suppliers (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2024). These payment constraints influence supplier selection decisions in important ways: purchasing specialists may prefer domestic suppliers who can absorb payment delays to foreign suppliers who demand prompt settlement, even if the foreign supplier offers superior quality or price competitiveness.

The customs and import regime in Algeria adds a further layer of complexity to supply chain management. Customs procedures are widely reported by industrial operators as cumbersome and unpredictable, creating significant delays and cost overruns in import logistics (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2024). For purchasing specialists, these logistical constraints necessitate longer planning horizons, larger safety stocks, and careful supplier selection decisions that account for supplier lead time reliability and flexibility under Algerian import conditions. These structural characteristics of the regulatory and logistical environment thus directly shape the criteria and strategies through which purchasing specialists evaluate and select suppliers.

In conclusion, the conceptual framework highlights that supplier selection is not an isolated operational task but a strategic process shaped by multiple factors, including evaluation criteria, sourcing strategies, and the decision-making behaviour of purchasing specialists. Furthermore, it emphasises that the Algerian industrial context plays a critical role in influencing these decisions. This integrated perspective provides a comprehensive basis for examining how purchasing practices are carried out in reality and sets the stage for the empirical analysis of the study.

Conclusion of the chapter I

In conclusion, this chapter has presented a comprehensive review of the literature related to purchasing management, the role of suppliers in supply chain performance, and supplier selection strategies. The review highlighted how purchasing has evolved from a primarily administrative and operational function into a strategic activity that plays a significant role in improving organizational performance and competitiveness. In this context, suppliers are recognized as critical partners in the supply chain, as their performance directly influences factors such as product quality, cost efficiency, delivery reliability, and innovation.

The chapter also examined the importance of supplier selection as a key decision-making process for organizations. Various studies and theoretical contributions were discussed to illustrate the criteria, models, and approaches used by purchasing specialists to evaluate and select suppliers. These contributions emphasize that supplier selection is a complex process that requires the consideration of multiple factors, including cost, quality, delivery performance, flexibility, and long-term collaboration.

Based on the analysis of the existing literature, the conceptual framework of the study was developed to clarify the key concepts and relationships that guide this research. This framework provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the supplier selection strategies adopted by purchasing specialists and helps position the study within the broader field of supply chain and purchasing management research. Overall, the chapter establishes the theoretical basis necessary for examining supplier selection strategies in the context of the Algerian industrial sector.

CHAPTER II DATA AND METHODS

This chapter provides both an overview of the organizational context and the methodological framework adopted for the study. It begins with a presentation of the BENHAMADI Group and SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS, highlighting their structure, activities, and strategic importance within the Algerian industrial sector. It also introduces the Supply Chain Management (SCM) function, emphasizing its objectives and missions within the company.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the research methodology. It outlines the qualitative approach, epistemological positioning, research strategy, data collection methods, sampling technique, and data analysis procedures used to investigate supplier selection strategies. This approach enables a better understanding of both real world context and the scientific method used in this study.

Section 1 : Organizational Context

This section introduces the organizational context of the study, which is essential for understanding how supplier selection strategies are implemented in practice. By presenting the BENHAMADI Group and SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS, the section situates the research within a real industrial environment characterized by complex supply chain operations and strong dependence on external suppliers.

Establishing this context allows for a better understanding of the conditions under which purchasing managers make supplier selection decisions. It also highlights the strategic importance of procurement and supply chain management within the company, thereby providing a foundation for analyzing the practices, criteria, and challenges associated with supplier selection in the Algerian industrial sector.

1. Presentation of the BENHAMADI Group

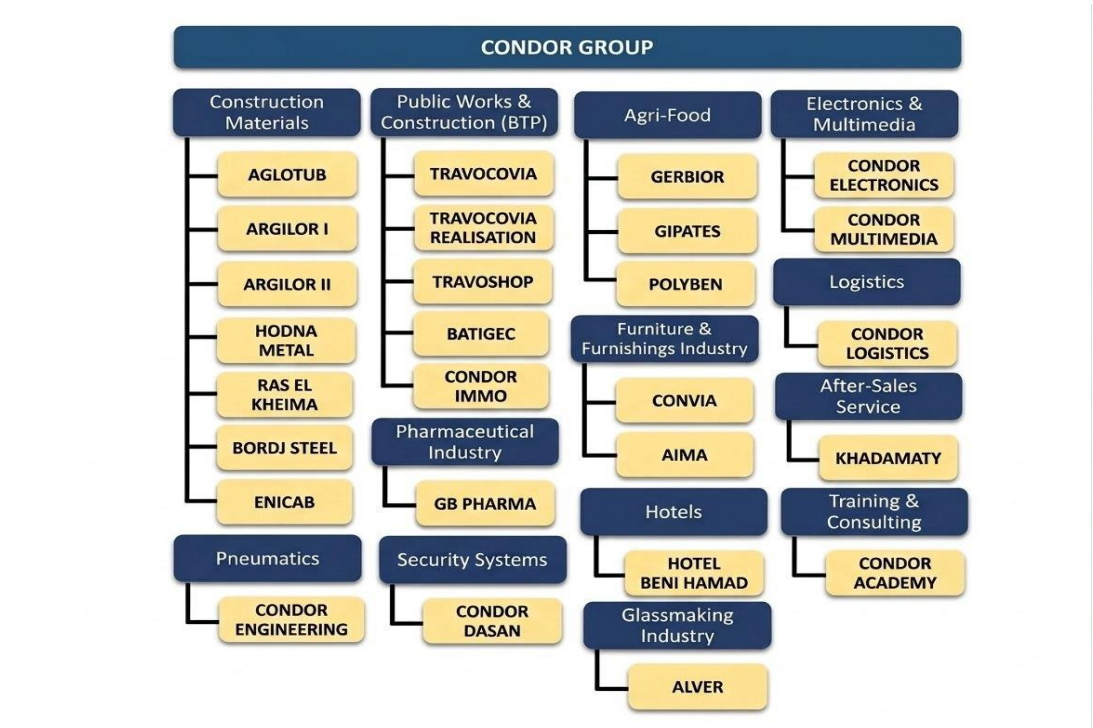
The Benhamadi Group is an Algerian industrial conglomerate specialized in the manufacturing and marketing of electronic goods, household appliances, construction materials, and food products.

Recently, the Benhamadi Group has experienced significant growth across various sectors. Today, the group operates 27 subsidiaries spanning a wide range of activities:

- Construction & Public Works (BTP)
- Electronics & Multimedia
- Agri-food (Food Processing)
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Logistics
- Pharmaceutical Industry
- After-Sales Service (SAV)
- Tire Manufacturing (Pneumatics)
- Furniture & Home Furnishings
- Security Systems
- Glass Industry
- Training & Consulting

The group is now recognized as one of the most powerful and active Algerian corporate entities within the national economy. It operates across diverse fields of activity and consistently delivers impressive results. The following chart illustrates the different components of the group.

Figure 6: Corporate Structure Of Benhamadi Group



Source: internal documents of the enterprise

2. Presentation of SPA Condor Electronics

Condor was established within a favourable economic climate, leveraging a competitive local market that serves as a gateway for both national and potential international investment. The company was created to meet the increasingly significant and evolving needs of the electronic products sector.

BENHAMADI "Trade Antar", more commonly known as "Condor", operates in the manufacturing, marketing, and after-sales service of electronic devices and household appliances.

The headquarters of SPA CONDOR is located in the industrial zone of the Bordj Bou Arreridj wilaya, specifically on the M'Sila road. The company covers a total area of 40,108 square meters and operates with a share capital of 4,277,000,000 DA. Its turnover stands at 58,277,336,043.48 DA, and it currently employs 4,614 people.

Condor is structured around six production units (business units), all located in Bordj Bou Arreridj. Registered in April 2002, it conducts its activities in accordance with Algerian commercial law.

Furthermore, the company has obtained several certifications that testify to its commitment to quality, environment, and safety:

- ISO 9001 version 2000, issued by the AFAQ AFNOR body on March 27, 2007.
- ISO 9001 version 2015, for the quality management system.
- ISO 14001 version 2015, for environmental management.
- ISO 45001 version 2018, relating to occupational health and safety (OH&S).

As part of its strategy for diversification and industrial integration, in 2025, CONDOR launched an ambitious new project: the creation of SPA Zentech. This department is dedicated to the production of compressors for refrigerators and other household appliances, with the objective of manufacturing a 100% Algerian and entirely localized product.

2.1 History and Evolution

Born from the entrepreneurial initiative of the Benhamadi brothers in the late 1990s, the company began with the importation of electronic products. As early as 2002, it pivoted toward local assembly, followed by increasingly integrated production.

This progressive evolution, supported by over $300 million in cumulative investments since 2012, has enabled CONDOR to consolidate its position on the national market while adapting to the requirements of the international context.

Table 3: Company Profile

Category	Information
Logo	
Date of Establishment	02/09/2002
Legal Form	Joint-Stock Company (SPA)
Headquarters	Activity Zone, M'sila Road, Lot 70, Section 161, Bordj Bou Arreridj, 34000 - Algeria
Activity	Manufacturing, marketing, and after-sales service (SAV) of electronic and household appliances.
General Manager (DG)	Harouz Ahmed
Chairman of the Board (PCA)	Omar Benhamadi
Website	https://www.condor.dz/
Strategic Partners	• GREE, HISENSE, MIDEA, NINGBO TEC, IMP AND EXP (China) • DONGBU DAEWOO (South Korea) • INTEL and MICROSOFT (USA) • OUEST ISOL VENTIL (France)
Trademark Filing Date (INAPI)	04/30/2003

Source: internal document of the enterprise

2.2 Missions and Objectives of the Company SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS

The company "Antar Trade" – widely known as Condor – located in Bordj Bou Arreridj, plays a key role in the national economy. It contributes actively to meeting local demand for electronic and household appliances, while supporting the development of the private sector by providing a wide range of equipment tailored to the needs of Algerian businesses.

Objectives

- Maximize profit.
- Rationalize production.
- Increase market share and attract new customers.
- Build customer loyalty.
- Ensure a high quality-to-price ratio.
- Develop professionalism among employees.
- Strengthen the Condor brand within the Algerian market.
- Constantly create and innovate.

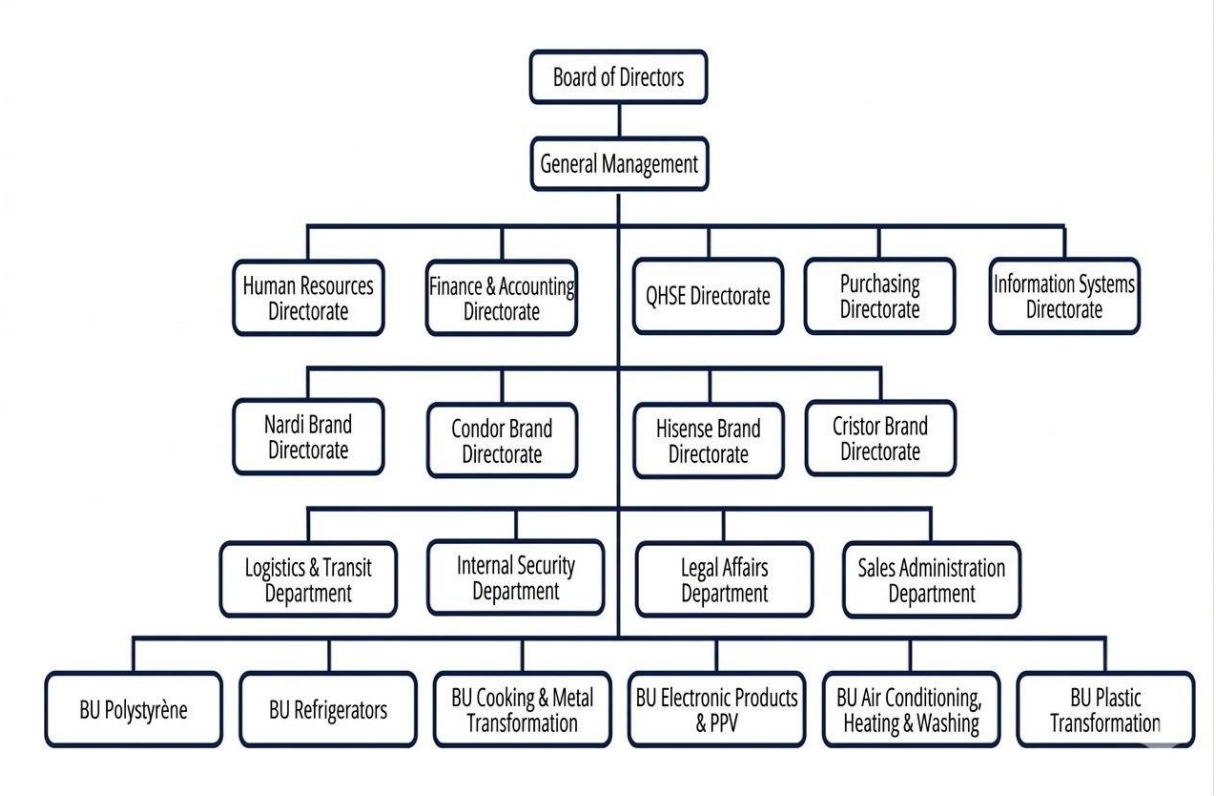
Missions

- Lead the way for Algerian companies in the field, demonstrating that success is possible when rules of seriousness and commitment are applied.
- Ensure a steady supply to the household appliance and electronics market.
- Conquer the international market, increase production volumes, and boost profits.
- Drive industrial development, production, innovation, promotion, marketing, and distribution for the company.

2.3 Company Organizational Chart

The organizational structure of Condor is based on the interaction between several functions, with a clear distribution of responsibilities and a division of labour among departments. The attached figure provides an illustration of this.

Figure 7: organizational chart of Condor Electronics



Source: internal documents of the enterprise

3. Presentation of the SCM Department

In this section, we present the Supply Chain Management (SCM) function within Condor Electronics by outlining its objectives and missions. SCM plays a strategic role in the company's overall logistical performance, particularly by ensuring the fluidity of material flows and guaranteeing the availability of resources necessary for production.

3.1 Objectives of the SCM Department

The objectives pursued by the SCM department are multifaceted:

- **Ensure product availability:** Deliver the right quantities, at the right time, and to the right place.
- **Reduce logistical costs:** Optimize procurement, warehousing, and transportation costs.
- **Improve lead times:** Make the chain more responsive to demand and unforeseen events.

- **Strengthen internal coordination:** Streamline exchanges between purchasing, production, logistics, and sales.
- **Enhance overall performance:** Guarantee an agile, reliable, and sustainable supply chain to support the company's competitiveness.

3.2 Missions of the SCM Department

- **Manage purchasing and procurement:** Secure the flow of raw materials from suppliers.
- **Plan and organize logistical flows:** Coordinate transportation, storage, and distribution.
- **Optimize inventory management:** Avoid stockouts and overstocking in alignment with sales forecasts.
- **Monitor logistical performance:** Use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as service levels, lead times, and inventory turnover to drive efficiency.
- **Anticipate and manage risks:** Implement resilience strategies to handle disruptions (delays, crises, shortages, etc.).

In conclusion, the organizational context presented in this section provides a crucial foundation for the empirical investigation of supplier selection strategies. The characteristics of SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS—such as its industrial scale, reliance on international suppliers, and structured supply chain function—create a relevant setting for examining how purchasing decisions are made in practice.

Understanding this environment helps to better interpret the behaviours, choices, and constraints faced by purchasing managers. It also reinforces the relevance of the case study for exploring supplier selection strategies within the broader context of the Algerian industrial sector. This contextual grounding will support the analysis and discussion of findings in the subsequent chapters.

Section 2: Research Methodology

This subsection outlines the research methodology used to explore supplier selection strategies. It explains the choice of a qualitative approach, the interpretivist epistemological positioning, and the adoption of a case study strategy. It also presents the data collection methods, sampling strategy, and analytical techniques employed to ensure a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the research problem.

1. Research Approach

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore supplier selection strategies within an industrial context.

Qualitative research is particularly suitable for examining complex organizational processes and managerial practices, as it enables an in-depth understanding of individuals' experiences, perceptions, and decision-making behaviours (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Unlike quantitative methods, which emphasize measurement and statistical analysis, qualitative research focuses on interpreting meanings and understanding phenomena within their real-life context.

The choice of this approach is justified by the nature of the research problem, which seeks to answer "how" and "why" purchasing managers select suppliers. Supplier selection is a multi-dimensional process involving both objective criteria (cost, quality, delivery) and subjective judgments (trust, experience, and risk perception). Therefore, a qualitative approach allows for a richer and more nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

2. Epistemological Positioning

This research is grounded in an interpretivist epistemological stance.

Interpretivism assumes that reality is socially constructed and that knowledge is derived from understanding individuals' interpretations of their experiences (Saunders et al., 2019). In the context of this study, supplier selection decisions are not purely technical but are influenced by managerial perceptions, organizational culture, and environmental constraints.

By adopting an interpretivist perspective, the study aims to capture how purchasing managers perceive, interpret, and implement supplier selection strategies within their specific organizational setting.

3. Research Strategy: Case Study Approach

This study employs a case study strategy, focusing on a single organization.

The case study approach is appropriate for investigating contemporary phenomena within their real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018). It allows for a comprehensive and holistic analysis of organizational practices.

Justification for the Case Study

The research is conducted within SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS.

The selection of this company is justified by several factors:

- It is one of the leading industrial firms in Algeria, operating in the electronics manufacturing sector
- It has a structured purchasing and supply chain function, making it suitable for analysing formal supplier selection strategies
- Its operations rely heavily on external suppliers, increasing the strategic importance of supplier selection
- It provides access to experienced purchasing professionals, enabling the collection of rich primary data

The use of a single case study is appropriate when the objective is to gain an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon rather than to generalize findings statistically (Yin, 2018).

4. Data Collection Methods

The data collection process is based on documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews.

4.1 Documentary Analysis

A documentary analysis was conducted to support the study through the review of relevant secondary data, including academic literature, books, reports, internal company documents, and supplier evaluation and selection forms (see Appendices B and C). The supplier evaluation and selection forms were included because they provide direct evidence of how suppliers are assessed and selected in practice, allowing the researcher to compare formal procedures with the experiences reported by purchasing specialists during the interviews. Three supplier selection forms were purposefully chosen because they represented different

supplier selection cases and contained sufficient information on evaluation criteria, assessment methods, and final selection decisions. Analysing these documents enabled an in-depth understanding of the supplier selection process while ensuring a manageable and detailed examination within the scope of the study.

Documentary analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents to extract meaningful information (Bowen, 2009). It provides a theoretical foundation and helps contextualize the empirical findings.

4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The primary data collection method used in this study is semi-structured interviews conducted with purchasing managers and procurement professionals.

Interviews are widely used in qualitative research because they allow for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, experiences, and decision-making processes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). They enable the researcher to gather detailed and context-specific information that cannot be captured through quantitative methods.

Semi-structured interviews are particularly appropriate because they combine:

- A predefined set of questions based on the research objectives
- Flexibility to explore emerging themes during the discussion

This approach ensures both consistency and depth in data collection (Saunders, et al., 2019).

4.3 Interview Guide

An interview guide was developed to structure the data collection process while maintaining flexibility (see Appendix A).

The guide is designed based on the research objectives and literature review and includes the following themes:

- Supplier selection process
- Supplier selection criteria
- Supplier relationship management
- Sourcing strategies
- Challenges specific to the Algerian industrial environment

The use of an interview guide enhances the reliability of the study by ensuring consistency across interviews (Saunders et al., 2019).

5. Data Collection Tools

To ensure accurate and reliable data collection, the following tools are used:

- Audio recording of interviews (with participants' consent)
- Note-taking during interviews.
- Full transcription of recorded data

Recording interviews allows for precise data capture and facilitates detailed analysis (Creswell, & Poth, 2018).

6. Sampling Strategy

This study uses a purposive sampling technique.

Purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on their expertise and relevance to the research topic (Patton, 2002). It is widely used in qualitative research to obtain rich and meaningful data.

The sample includes:

- Purchasing specialists.

Although purchasing managers and department heads could have provided additional strategic insights, interviews with these individuals could not be conducted due to their limited availability during the data collection period. Consequently, the study focused on purchasing specialists who were directly involved in supplier evaluation and selection processes and were able to provide detailed information relevant to the research objectives.

The sample size is expected to range between 4 and 6 participants, which is considered sufficient to reach data saturation, the point at which no new significant insights emerge (Guest et al., 2006).

7. Data Analysis

At the initial stage of data analysis, the interview data were reviewed and organized according to the main themes of the interview guide, including the purchasing function, the supplier selection process, selection criteria, supplier relationship management, sourcing strategies, challenges in the Algerian context, and potential improvements. This step

facilitated the identification of key ideas and ensured a clear and structured overview of the collected data.

In a second phase, the qualitative data analysis software NVivo was used to conduct a more in-depth and systematic analysis of the interview transcripts. NVivo enabled the organization, coding, and classification of the data, thereby enhancing the rigor, transparency, and traceability of the analytical process.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, a combination of lexical, linguistic, and thematic approaches was adopted. The lexical analysis focused on identifying recurring words and expressions related to key dimensions of supplier selection, such as cost, quality, delivery reliability, financial stability, technical capability, and sustainability. This step helped highlight the most emphasized criteria in supplier selection decisions.

In addition, a linguistic analysis was conducted to assess the degree of consistency and convergence within the interview data. This approach, supported by NVivo, made it possible to identify similarities in discourse and reinforce the reliability of the findings.

Subsequently, a thematic analysis was carried out by coding the data into meaningful categories (nodes) within NVivo, based on the structure of the interview guide. This analysis also incorporated insights from documentary data related to supplier selection and evaluation tools, allowing for a triangulated interpretation of the findings. The main themes identified include:

• The role and strategic importance of the purchasing function.

• The supplier selection process and decision-making practices.

• Supplier selection criteria and evaluation methods.

• Supplier relationship management practices.

• Sourcing strategies (single vs. multiple sourcing).

• Challenges specific to the Algerian industrial environment.

• Proposed improvements to supplier selection practices.

These themes were further refined and interconnected to identify patterns, similarities, and differences within the data. Particular attention was given to the most relevant and information-rich extracts, especially those reflecting strategic reasoning, decision-making logic, and contextual constraints influencing supplier selection practices.

This structured analytical approach enabled the generation of comprehensive and reliable findings regarding supplier selection strategies within SPA Condor Electronics, while ensuring that the results accurately reflect both organizational practices and the specific dynamics of the Algerian industrial context.

8. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the rigor of the research, several measures are implemented:

- **Credibility**: achieved through in-depth interviews with knowledgeable participants
- **Consistency**: ensured by using a standardized interview guide
- **Triangulation**: comparing responses across participants
- **Transparency**: clearly documenting the research process

In qualitative research, validity refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of findings, while reliability refers to the consistency of the research procedures (Saunders, et al., 2019).

9. Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to established ethical principles:

- Informed consent is obtained from all participants
- Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed
- Data is used strictly for academic purposes
- Participants have the right to withdraw at any time

Ethical considerations are essential to ensure the integrity and credibility of the research process (Creswell, & Poth, 2018).

Conclusion of chapter II

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of both the organizational context and the methodological framework of the study. The presentation of the BENHAMADI Group and SPA CONDOR ELECTRONICS has highlighted the industrial environment in which supplier selection strategies are implemented, emphasizing the strategic role of the SCM function.

Furthermore, the detailed description of the research methodology has demonstrated the relevance of the qualitative approach, the interpretivist stance, and the case study strategy in addressing the research objectives. The methods of data collection and analysis have been carefully designed to ensure the validity, reliability, and depth of the findings.

Overall, this chapter establishes a solid foundation for the empirical analysis that follows, enabling a thorough understanding of supplier selection practices within the Algerian industrial sector.

CHAPTER III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This third and final chapter presents the empirical part of the study. It begins with the analysis of data collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with purchasing specialists involved in supplier selection, as well as internal company documents related to supplier selection and evaluation. The use of NVivo allows for a structured and thematic organization of the interview data, ensuring a rigorous interpretation of the results.

This chapter also provides answers to the research questions through a comparison between empirical findings and the literature review. In addition, it highlights the main challenges identified in supplier selection within the Algerian industrial context, proposes practical recommendations, and suggests an action plan to improve supplier selection strategies.

Section 1: Results

In this section, we present the results obtained from semi-structured interviews as well as the analysis of internal company documents. These results provide a clearer understanding of how the supplier selection process is carried out within SPA Condor Electronics.

1. Presentation of Respondents' Profiles

This study is based on interviews with purchasing professionals involved in supplier selection. All participants have roughly the same level of experience, approximately two years, and all hold the position of purchasing specialist. This consistency in their experience ensures valuable insights. They are all directly involved in key activities such as supplier identification, evaluation, and performance monitoring, ensuring the data's relevance to the research objectives.

Table 4: Profile of Study Participants

Participant	Role / Function	Experience
P1	Purchasing Specialist	2 years
P2	Purchasing Specialist	2 years
P3	Purchasing Specialist	2 years
P4	Purchasing Specialist	1 year
P5	Purchasing Specialist	2 years

Source: Compiled by the author based on interview data

2. Lexical Analysis

The lexical analysis of the interview corpus, carried out using NVivo and illustrated through the word cloud, highlights the most frequently used terms by respondents. The word “supplier” appears as the most dominant, suggesting that discussions are largely centred on supplier-related decisions.

Other highly recurrent words include evaluation, performance, cost, criteria, process, decision, relationships, delivery reliability, and capabilities. These terms indicate that purchasing specialists focus on structured evaluation processes and key performance indicators when selecting suppliers.

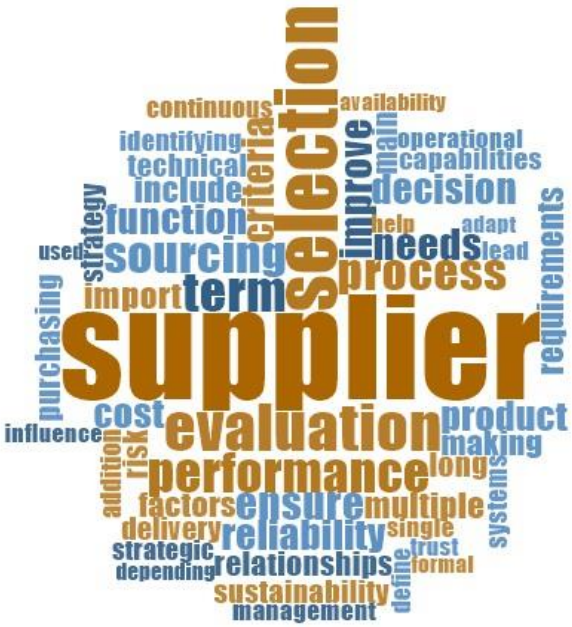
Additionally, words such as sourcing, needs, requirements, single, multiple, risk, and availability appear with moderate frequency, reflecting considerations related to sourcing strategies and contextual constraints.

Overall, the repetition of these terms across interviews shows a strong consistency in the vocabulary used by respondents.

Interpretation

The lexical analysis shows that supplier selection is mainly perceived as a structured and multi-criteria process, strongly focused on performance, cost, and reliability. At the same time, the presence of terms related to relationships and risk indicates that decision-making also includes human and contextual factors, particularly within the constraints of the Algerian industrial environment.

Figure 8: Word Cloud



Source: realised by NVivo

To illustrate the analysis performed using the lexical analysis, here is a word frequency table showing the most frequent words in the interview responses. This table highlights the key terms that emerge and provides a better understanding of the important themes addressed by the participants.

Table 5: Word Frequency

These results confirm the effectiveness of the linguistic approach applied using NVivo, which not only allows for the verification of consistency across interviews, but also helps identify thematic and discursive relationships within the analysed data.

3. Thematic analysis

The thematic approach is a method of analysis that focuses on identifying and exploring the main themes emerging from the collected data. It allows for the organization of qualitative information into meaningful categories, facilitating the interpretation of respondents' perceptions and practices.

3.1 Purchasing function at SPA Condor Electronics

The findings highlight the central role of the purchasing function at Condor Electronics, emphasizing its dual operational and strategic nature as well as the active involvement of purchasing specialists in supplier selection.

3.1.1. Dual Nature of the Purchasing Function: Operational and Strategic Dimensions

A key point shared by all five participants is that the purchasing function at Condor Electronics operates on two levels at the same time: operational and strategic. These two dimensions are different, but closely linked. This view appears clearly across all interviews.

At the operational level, participants described routine and recurring activities. These tasks form the daily work of purchasing specialists. P1 explained that this includes placing orders and monitoring deliveries. P2 gave a similar description and stressed the importance of ensuring that all materials and services are available when needed for production. P4 referred to operational purchasing as managing routine tasks such as ordering and tracking deliveries. P5 also highlighted ordering and delivery follow-up as key responsibilities. These responses show strong agreement about the nature of operational activities.

At the strategic level, participants described a different type of contribution. These activities go beyond daily execution and focus on long-term impact. P1 stated that purchasing supports cost optimization, supplier risk management, and long-term supplier relationships. P2 mentioned similar points, including cost reduction, risk management, and relationship development. P3 added risk mitigation and strategic sourcing. P4 focused on supplier risk management and cost optimization. P5 explained that purchasing contributes to cost control and risk management at a broader organizational level. These responses show that purchasing plays an important strategic role within the company.

3.1.2. Role of Purchasing Specialists in Supplier Selection

Participants also showed strong agreement about their role in the supplier selection process. Most of them described their role as a three-stage process. First, they identify potential suppliers. Second, they assess supplier capabilities. Third, they contribute to the final selection decision.

P1 explained this role clearly. They described identifying suitable suppliers, evaluating their capabilities, and participating in the final decision. They also emphasized the need to ensure

that suppliers meet requirements related to quality, cost, and delivery performance. P2 added that this process involves close collaboration with other departments. They mentioned working with engineering and quality teams to ensure that suppliers meet all expectations.

P4 provided a more detailed description. They explained that the role includes identifying and shortlisting suppliers, analysing their capabilities, and taking part in the final decision. They also highlighted that evaluation is carried out from both technical and operational perspectives. This ensures that selected suppliers align with company requirements

In addition, some participants highlighted the coordination role of purchasing specialists. P1 and P4 explained that purchasing acts as a link between external suppliers and internal departments. This role helps ensure communication and alignment across the organization.

3.2 Supplier selection process

The findings show that supplier selection at SPA Condor Electronics is based on a structured process supported by formal evaluation tools.

3.2.1 A Six Stage Structured Process

All five participants described the supplier selection process as a structured sequence of steps. Their accounts were highly consistent in both structure and content. At SPA Condor Electronics, the process can be divided into six main stages.

The first stage is the identification of internal needs. Participants described this as a formal and structured phase. It involves defining production requirements, technical specifications, and expected demand. A key feature of this stage is its cross-functional nature. P1 referred to coordination with production and technical teams. P2 highlighted collaboration with engineering, production, quality, and R&D. P3 added that marketing is also involved in identifying market needs. P4 described regular collaboration with quality, marketing, and technical departments. This broad involvement ensures that the specifications given to purchasing reflect the overall needs of the organization.

The second stage is the search for potential suppliers. This involves identifying possible supppliers through market research, existing supplier databases, and international sourcing channels. The third stage is the issuance of requests for quotation (RFQs). These are sent to selected suppliers and include detailed requirements related to price, quality, delivery, and technical specifications.

The fourth stage is the evaluation and comparison of supplier offers. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of this stage. It involves using structured evaluation tools to assess and compare proposals. The fifth stage is negotiation. At this point, discussions focus on price, payment terms, delivery conditions, and after-sales service.

The sixth and final stage is the formal selection of the supplier. This includes documenting the decision and confirming the chosen supplier according to company procedures.

Table 6: Stages of the Supplier Selection Process at SPA Condor Electronics

Step	Stage	Description	Cross-functional Involvement
1	Need Identification	Production requirements, technical specifications, and demand forecasts are defined in collaboration with multiple departments.	Production, Quality, R&D, Marketing
2	Supplier Search	Potential suppliers are identified via market prospecting, existing databases, and trade networks. Domestic and international sources are consulted.	Purchasing, SCM, Engineering
3	Request for Quotation (RFQ)	Formal RFQs specifying price, quality, delivery, and technical requirements are issued to pre-screened candidates.	Purchasing
4	Evaluation and Comparison	Received offers are systematically scored using structured evaluation sheets and KPI-based criteria covering quality, delivery, price, technical capability, and supplier experience.	Purchasing, Quality, Finance
5	Negotiation	Final terms are negotiated with shortlisted suppliers covering price, payment conditions, delivery schedules, and after-sales service.	Purchasing, Finance, Legal
6	Final Selection	The optimal supplier is formally selected, documented, and validated. The decision is archived for future performance benchmarking.	Purchasing, SCM Management

Source: Compiled by the author based on interview data and internal company documents

3.2.2 Formal Instrumentation: Supplier Selection and Evaluation Forms

The interview findings are supported and enriched by documentary evidence from two formal tools used by Condor's SCM department. These tools show how supplier selection and evaluation are applied in practice.

The first tool is the Supplier Selection Form (Fiche de sélection des fournisseurs, Code A.01/PR.SCM 01) (See APPENDIX A). It is used before contracting with new suppliers.

This form evaluates suppliers based on thirteen criteria. Each criterion is scored from zero to three. The total maximum score is thirty-five points. The decision is based on three thresholds. A score above twenty-eight is considered satisfactory and leads to supplier approval. A score between fourteen and twenty-eight indicates conditional approval, with some reservations. A score of fourteen or below is considered unsatisfactory and leads to rejection or suspension.

The second tool is the Supplier Evaluation Form (Fiche d'évaluation des fournisseurs, Code A.02/PR.SCM 01) (See APPENDIX C). It is used for existing suppliers as part of regular performance reviews. This form includes eight criteria. Each criterion is rated from one to three, then multiplied by a specific coefficient. Some criteria have more importance than others. Price and payment terms have the highest weight, with a coefficient of five. Quality, quality-price ratio, delivery performance, SST commitment, and environmental respect each have a coefficient of four. Technical assistance has a coefficient of three. The maximum weighted score is ninety-nine points. A score above sixty-six indicates good performance and leads to supplier retention. A score between thirty-three and sixty-six leads to conditional continuation. A score of thirty-three indicates poor performance and leads to suspension.

When these tools are applied to three suppliers, the results show clear differences in performance. Supplier 01 (Water Dispenser) achieved the highest results. It scored thirty-five in the selection phase and ninety-one in the evaluation phase. This confirms its position as a reliable and strategic partner. Supplier 02 (Refrigerator-Freezer) obtained a score of twenty-eight in selection and sixty-two in evaluation. In both cases, the result is conditional, meaning the supplier is maintained but with some concerns. Supplier 03 (Ice Maker) scored eighteen in the selection phase, which is acceptable but not strong. However, its evaluation score dropped to thirty-three, which is the threshold for suspension. This shows a decline in performance after the initial selection.

3.3 Supplier Selection Criteria

The results indicate that supplier selection is guided by a set of clearly defined criteria, with varying levels of importance.

3.3.1 Primary Criteria: Quality and Delivery Reliability

The identification of supplier selection criteria showed the strongest level of agreement among participants. All five participants clearly identified quality and delivery reliability as the most important criteria. They also gave very similar explanations for this choice.

P1 stated directly that quality and delivery reliability are the most critical factors. They explained that problems in these areas can interrupt production and reduce customer satisfaction. P2 gave the same assessment. P4 added that any failure in quality or delivery can cause production disruptions, which highlights the dependence of manufacturing operations on reliable suppliers. P5 also confirmed that poor quality or delays in delivery negatively affect both production processes and customer satisfaction.

3.3.2 Comprehensive Criteria Framework

In addition to quality and delivery, participants described a broader set of criteria. This shows that supplier selection is based on multiple dimensions. All five participants mentioned price as a basic criterion. However, they also emphasized the importance of the quality/price ratio. This means that purchasing specialists do not focus only on cost, but on the value received compared to the quality provided. This approach is similar to the concept of total cost of ownership discussed in the literature.

All participants also mentioned technical capability and supplier experience. These criteria reflect the importance of selecting suppliers who have the necessary skills and knowledge. Payment terms and payment methods were also consistently highlighted. This reflects the financial aspect of purchasing, especially in the Algerian context, where financing conditions and currency issues can influence procurement decisions.

All participants also identified health and safety commitment, referred to as SST in the company's documents. This shows that non-financial and regulatory aspects are included in the evaluation process. In addition, all participants mentioned financial stability as an important criterion. They explained that a supplier's financial situation can affect its ability to deliver consistently and maintain quality. A financially weak supplier may create risks such as delays, lower quality, or even market exit.

Finally, technical assistance was highlighted as another important factor. Participants explained that suppliers are expected to provide support after purchase, including training and regular visits. This criterion is also included in the company's formal selection form, which confirms that it is not only discussed in interviews but also applied in practice.

3.3.3 Sustainability Criteria: An Emerging Dimension

The discussion of sustainability criteria in the interviews shows a nuanced and evolving pattern. All five participants confirmed that sustainability is considered in supplier evaluation. However, the level of importance given to it is not the same across participants. This suggests that sustainability is still developing within the company's purchasing practices, rather than being fully established.

All participants confirmed that sustainability criteria are increasingly taken into account. P2 gave a slightly stronger view and referred specifically to environmental compliance and ethical standards. P3 made a shorter statement, but also confirmed that environmental and ethical factors are being integrated. P4 provided a more detailed explanation and mentioned both environmental compliance and ethical practices. P5's response followed the same general direction as the others.

A key point is the repeated use of the word "increasingly" by all participants. This shows that sustainability is gaining importance within the company. At the same time, it has not yet reached the same level as core criteria such as quality, delivery, and cost.

This interpretation is supported by the company's formal documents. The supplier selection form includes environmental respect and corporate social responsibility as evaluation criteria. However, their weights are relatively low compared to criteria such as price, quality, and ISO 9001 compliance. The supplier evaluation form also includes environmental respect, but with moderate weighting. These elements confirm that sustainability is formally present, but not yet dominant.

3.3.4 Comparison Between Interview Findings and Documentary Evidence

A comparison between the interview data and the documentary analysis reveals some differences between the perceptions of purchasing specialists and the formal evaluation tools used by the company. While all participants identified quality and delivery reliability as the most important supplier selection criteria, the documentary analysis shows that price and payment terms receive the highest weighting coefficient in the Supplier Evaluation Form. The distinct perspectives reflected in each source can explain this difference. During the interviews, participants emphasized the operational consequences of supplier performance, as poor quality or delivery failures can directly disrupt production and affect customer satisfaction. In contrast, the formal evaluation form translates organizational priorities into measurable indicators, assigning greater weight to financial considerations to ensure cost

control and purchasing efficiency. Therefore, quality may be perceived as the most critical criterion in practice, while price receives greater formal emphasis in the evaluation system.

A similar observation can be made regarding sustainability criteria. Interview participants consistently stated that environmental and ethical considerations are becoming increasingly important in supplier evaluation. However, the documentary analysis shows that sustainability-related criteria are assigned lower weights than traditional criteria such as price, quality, and delivery performance. This difference suggests that sustainability is currently in a transitional phase within the company. Purchasing specialists recognize its growing strategic importance and expect it to play a larger role in future supplier decisions, but this evolution has not yet been fully reflected in the formal evaluation tools. As a result, sustainability appears to be more prominent in managerial perceptions than in the current weighting system used for supplier assessment.

Table 7: Summary of Formal Supplier Instrumentation at SPA Condor Electronics

Form Type	**Code**	**Criteria (No.)**	**Max Score**	**Decision Thresholds**	**Outcomes (3 Suppliers)**
Supplier Selection Form (Fiche de selection)	A.01/PR .SCM 01	13 criteria: market seniority, reputation, price, quality, Q/P ratio, delivery compliance, payment mode, payment terms, technical assistance, after-sales (SAV), ISO 9001, environment, corporate responsibility	35 pts (0-3 per criterion)	Satisfactory: >28 (retained) Conditional: 14-28 (retained with reservations) Unsatisfactory: <=14 (suspended)	Supplier 01 (Water Dispenser): 35 - Retained Supplier 02 (Refrigerator-Freezer): 28 - Conditional Supplier 03 (Ice Maker): 18 - Conditional
Supplier Evaluation Form (Fiche d'evaluation)	A.02/PR .SCM 01	8 weighted criteria: price (x5), quality (x4), Q/P ratio (x4), technical assistance (x3), delivery (x4), payment modalities (x5), SST commitment (x4), environmental respect (x4)	99 pts (1-3 x coefficient)	Maintained: >66 Conditional: 33-66 Suspended: =33	Supplier 01 (Water Dispenser): 91 - Maintained Supplier 02 (Refrigerator-Freezer): 62 - Conditional Supplier 03 (Ice Maker): 33 - Suspended

Source: Internal documents of SPA Condor Electronics (Codes A.01/PR.SCM 01 and A.02/PR.SCM 01)

These findings are important for several reasons. First, they confirm that the processes described in the interviews are not informal. They are supported by clear and structured tools. Second, the company uses different tools for selection and evaluation. Each tool has its own criteria and scoring method.

An important observation concerns the difference between the two tools. The selection form uses a simple scoring system, where all criteria have equal weight. In contrast, the evaluation form uses weighted criteria, giving more importance to key factors such as price and payment terms. This suggests that the company applies stricter and more detailed analysis during the evaluation phase than during the initial selection. This difference raises an interesting methodological question. It suggests that the selection process may be less

rigorous, which could allow some suppliers to be accepted initially but fail later during performance evaluation. The case of Supplier 02 partly illustrates this situation.

3.4 Supplier Relationship Management

The findings highlight the importance of strong supplier relationships and structured performance evaluation in supporting effective purchasing practices.

3.4.1 Preference for Long-Term Relational Orientations

The findings show a strong and consistent preference for long-term relationships with suppliers. All five participants clearly stated that they favor stable and lasting partnerships rather than short-term, transactional interactions.

P1 explained this preference by focusing on its practical benefits. They noted that long-term relationships help build trust, improve communication, and enhance supplier performance over time. P2 expressed a very similar view. P3, P4, and P5 also gave consistent responses. They all linked long-term collaboration to the development of trust, better communication, and continuous improvement in supplier performance.

3.4.2 Relational Foundations: Trust, Communication, and Mutual Benefit

When participants were asked about the key elements of successful supplier relationships, their answers were highly consistent. All five identified trust as the most important foundation.

P1 described trust as one of the main pillars, together with effective communication, mutual benefit, and continuous improvement. P2 added transparency to this list. They identified trust, transparency, communication, mutual benefit, and continuous improvement as essential elements. The other participants expressed similar ideas, with only minor differences in wording.

The idea of mutual benefit was especially important. Participants emphasized that relationships must create value for both the company and the supplier. This shows that supplier relationships are not based only on control or negotiation power. Instead, they are based on cooperation and shared value. This perspective is consistent with the relational exchange theory developed by Morgan and Hunt (1994), which highlights commitment and interdependence between partners.

Continuous improvement was also mentioned by all participants. This suggests that supplier relationships are seen as evolving partnerships. They are not limited to simple transactions. Instead, they are used as a way to improve performance over time.

3.4.3 Supplier Performance Evaluation Practices

All participants described supplier performance evaluation as an essential part of relationship management. They explained that performance is monitored through structured processes and clear indicators.

The key performance indicators mentioned were very similar across all interviews. They include delivery punctuality, defect rates, responsiveness, and cost control. These indicators form the basis for evaluating supplier performance.

P1 explained that suppliers are assessed using structured evaluation sheets. These sheets include several criteria and assign scores to each supplier. This description matches the formal evaluation form used by the company (Code A.02/PR.SCM 01). P2, P4, and P5 also referred to these formal tools and to the use of performance indicators. P5 added that evaluations are carried out regularly, which supports continuous improvement.

An important point is the strong alignment between interview data and documentary evidence. The criteria mentioned by participants — such as price, quality, delivery, technical assistance, payment conditions, SST commitment, and environmental respect — are all included in the formal evaluation system. This shows that these practices are not informal. They are clearly structured and applied through a weighted scoring system.

This level of formalization indicates a relatively advanced level of organizational maturity. It suggests that supplier evaluation at Condor is systematic, consistent, and well integrated into overall supply chain management practices.

3.5 Sourcing Strategies

The results reveal that sourcing strategies at SPA Condor Electronics are flexible and adapt to different operational and market conditions.

3.5.1 The use of Single and Multiple Sourcing

One of the most important findings of this study concerns the sourcing strategies used at SPA Condor Electronics. The results show that the company does not rely on a single approach. Instead, both single sourcing and multiple sourcing are used. The choice between these two strategies depends on the situation.

All five participants described this flexible approach. P1 explained that the choice depends on specific conditions. They noted that single sourcing can reduce costs and strengthen supplier relationships. At the same time, multiple sourcing helps reduce risks and improve flexibility. P2 gave a very similar explanation. They also emphasized cost optimization and relationship building for single sourcing, and risk reduction and flexibility for multiple sourcing.

P3 explained that both strategies are used together. The goal is to balance efficiency and risk. P4 and P5 confirmed the same logic. Their responses show a consistent understanding that sourcing decisions are not fixed. Instead, they are adapted based on context.

3.5.2 Factors Governing Strategy Adaptation

All participants confirmed that sourcing strategies change depending on the type of product and its importance. Several key factors were identified.

Product criticality was the most important factor mentioned by all participants. They explained that critical products are usually managed more carefully. This often leads to stronger and more stable relationships with selected suppliers.

Supplier market conditions were also highlighted. Participants referred to the availability of qualified suppliers and the level of competition in the market. These elements influence whether the company relies on one supplier or several.

Risk was another important factor. P1 and P4 emphasized that higher risks lead to more cautious strategies. P2 and P5 added that supplier reliability and availability also play a key role. P3 summarized these factors clearly, mentioning risk level, cost, supplier reliability, and market conditions as the main determinants.

Participants also linked these decisions to the Algerian industrial context. They explained that there are limits in the availability of local suppliers. They also mentioned exchange rate instability and administrative challenges related to imports. These conditions often encourage the use of multiple sourcing, especially for imported products, in order to reduce risk.

This situation creates a balance between two objectives. On one side, single sourcing offers benefits such as stronger relationships and better coordination. On the other side, multiple sourcing helps manage risks and ensures supply continuity. Participants showed that

purchasing specialists actively manage this balance. Their ability to adapt strategies based on context reflects a high level of practical decision-making and organizational capability.

3.6 Challenges and Improvement Perspectives

The findings identify several structural challenges affecting supplier selection, while also highlighting key areas for improvement at multiple levels.

3.6.1 Challenges in Supplier Selection

All five participants identified a set of challenges that affect supplier selection in the Algerian industrial context. These challenges are not only operational. They are structural and influence how purchasing decisions are made.

Import restrictions were mentioned by all participants as a major issue. P1 explained that they increase uncertainty and lead times. They also require more careful planning and stronger risk management. P4 confirmed that these restrictions make planning more complex and increase the need for risk mitigation. P5 added that import restrictions, combined with currency fluctuations, make supplier selection more difficult and uncertain.

Currency instability was also highlighted. P1, P2, and P5 explained that exchange rate fluctuations increase financial risk. This is especially important in Algeria, where access to foreign currency is regulated. Changes in exchange rates can significantly affect the cost of imported materials.

Logistical delays were another common challenge. All participants referred to issues such as port congestion, customs procedures, and weak logistics infrastructure. P3 explained that these factors increase uncertainty and complexity. P4 noted that they require more careful planning and coordination.

The limited availability of reliable local suppliers was also identified as a key constraint. P1, P3, and P5 emphasized that this limits the company’s options and increases dependence on international suppliers.

Finally, regulatory constraints were mentioned by P3 and P4. They referred to the complexity of import procedures and the administrative burden of compliance. These factors add additional pressure to the supplier selection process.

3.6.2 Proposed Improvements

Participants proposed several ways to improve supplier selection practices. These suggestions can be grouped into three main levels.

At the firm level, participants focused on improving internal systems. P1 suggested strengthening supplier evaluation methods, increasing the use of digital tools, and supporting local suppliers. P2 proposed similar actions, including developing local supplier capabilities, improving long-term partnerships, and enhancing evaluation systems. P4 also emphasized digital tools, local supplier development, and stronger strategic relationships. These ideas point toward a more structured, data-driven, and collaborative approach to supplier management.

At the practice level, P3 and P5 suggested increasing the frequency of supplier visits. They explained that direct visits help build stronger relationships, allow better evaluation of supplier capabilities, and help detect potential problems early. This reflects a practical and relationship-based approach to supplier management.

At the systemic level, participants highlighted a broader issue. Several responses pointed to the need to develop the local supplier base. This is not something that companies can solve alone. It requires support at the national or sector level. The current dependence on international suppliers, combined with import restrictions and currency instability, creates a structural weakness. Addressing this issue would require coordinated industrial and economic policies.

Section 2: Discussion

In this section, the findings of the study are interpreted in relation to the research questions that guided the investigation. Each question is addressed systematically in order to clarify how the empirical results contribute to answering the study's objectives. The discussion also situates these findings within the existing body of literature, highlighting points of convergence. This comparative approach allows for a deeper understanding of the results while strengthening the analytical contribution of the research. Furthermore, based on the insights derived from this analysis, an action plan is proposed to translate the findings into practical and strategic recommendations.

1. Answer of the research questions

The results are organized around the research questions, combining empirical evidence with relevant literature and highlighting insights specific to the Algerian context.

RQ1: Supplier selection strategies

Purchasing specialists use both single and multiple sourcing depending on product importance and risk. This is consistent with the literature, which explains that firms combine these strategies to balance strong supplier relationships and supply flexibility (Monczka et al., 2015; Saputro et al., 2022). However, the findings also show that factors specific to the Algerian context, such as import restrictions and limited supplier availability, influence this choice, extending the literature by highlighting the role of external constraints.

RQ2: Steps of the supplier selection process

The process includes identifying needs, searching for suppliers, issuing RFQs, evaluating offers, negotiating, and selecting suppliers. This aligns with the literature, which presents supplier selection as a structured and multi-stage process (De Boer et al., 2001; Van Weele, 2014). At the same time, the findings show that negotiation is treated as a distinct and important step, which adds a practical dimension that is less emphasized in theoretical models.

RQ3: Supplier selection criteria

Quality and delivery reliability are the most important criteria, followed by price, technical capability, and financial stability. This strongly confirms the literature, especially (Dickson, 1966), who identified quality and delivery as key factors, as well as more recent studies (Ferreira, & Silva, 2022; Taherdoost & Brard, 2019). In addition, the importance of payment terms reflects the Algerian context, extending the literature by showing how economic conditions can influence criteria priorities. Sustainability is present but less important, which is also consistent with recent research.

RQ4: Supplier relationship management

Purchasing specialists focus on long-term relationships based on trust, communication, and mutual benefit, supported by performance evaluation tools. This is in line with the literature on Supplier Relationship Management, which highlights trust and commitment as essential (Mettler & Rohner, 2009; Monczka et al., 2015; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The findings also confirm the shift from transactional to relational approaches described in the literature, even within a constrained environment.

RQ5: Choice between single and multiple sourcing

The choice between single and multiple sourcing depends on product criticality, risk, and supplier reliability. This confirms the literature, which recommends aligning sourcing strategies with these factors (Monczka et al., 2015; Kraljic, 1983). However, the findings also show that in the Algerian context, this choice is often influenced by external constraints such as regulations and currency instability, which extends the literature by showing that sourcing decisions are not always fully strategic.

RQ6: Challenges in the Algerian context

Purchasing specialists face challenges such as import restrictions, currency instability, logistical delays, and limited local suppliers. These findings are consistent with the literature on developing economies (Grondys, & Kot, 2025; Harouache et al., 2024; Lachache, 2020). At the same time, the results highlight that these constraints strongly influence decision-making, extending the literature by showing that supplier selection is shaped not only by internal strategies but also by the external environment.

Beyond identifying challenges, the findings also provide practical insights into potential improvements. At the firm level, participants emphasized the need to strengthen supplier

evaluation systems, increase the use of digital tools, and support the development of local suppliers. These recommendations reflect a shift toward more structured and data-driven decision-making processes.

At the operational level, the suggestion to increase supplier visits highlights the importance of direct interaction in improving supplier assessment and relationship quality. This aligns with relational approaches in the literature, which stress the role of communication and collaboration in enhancing supplier performance.

At a broader level, the need to develop the local supplier base points to structural limitations that cannot be addressed by individual firms alone. This suggests that improvements in supplier selection practices are partly dependent on systemic and institutional developments, thereby extending existing literature by emphasizing the role of the external environment in shaping procurement effectiveness.

2. Action Plan for Improving Supplier Selection Strategies

Based on the findings of this study, the following action plan proposes concrete improvements organized across three levels: firm-level, practice-level, and systemic. These recommendations respond directly to the gaps and challenges identified in the empirical data.

1. **Firm-Level Actions**

- **Harmonize the scoring instruments.** The Supplier Selection Form currently applies equal weight to all criteria, while the Supplier Evaluation Form uses differential coefficients. This inconsistency should be corrected by introducing weighted criteria into the selection form, giving greater importance to quality, delivery, and financial stability — the factors most critical to production continuity.
- **Implement supplier segmentation.** The company should formally adopt a segmentation framework inspired by the Kraljic matrix, classifying suppliers into strategic, bottleneck, leverage, and routine categories. This would guide more consistent and rational decisions about sourcing strategy, relationship investment, and evaluation depth for each supplier category.
- **Invest in a digital supplier management system.** A digital platform integrated with the existing ERP system would centralize supplier data, automate KPI tracking, and allow trend analysis over time. This would improve the quality and speed of sourcing decisions and help detect performance problems early.

2. **Practice-Level Actions**

- **Formalize supplier site visits.** Supplier visits should be scheduled systematically, especially for strategic suppliers and new candidates. Structured visit reports should be documented and integrated into the evaluation record. This strengthens relationships, builds trust, and enables early detection of operational risks.
- **Launch a domestic supplier development programme.** Rather than simply evaluating and rejecting local suppliers who do not yet meet requirements, the company should invest in developing their capabilities through technical assistance, joint workshops, and performance improvement roadmaps. This would progressively reduce dependence on international sourcing.
- **Create a cross-functional supplier review committee.** A quarterly internal committee bringing together purchasing, quality, production, and finance would institutionalize collaborative decision-making on key sourcing matters. This would ensure that supplier selection choices are aligned with the broader strategic priorities of the organization.

3. **Systemic-Level Actions**

- **Advocate for the development of the local supplier base.** The limited availability of qualified domestic suppliers is a structural problem that individual firms cannot resolve alone. Condor and other industrial companies should engage with sector associations and relevant ministries to support policies that develop domestic manufacturing capacity and reduce import dependency.
- **Promote knowledge sharing across the sector.** Purchasing challenges in Algeria are shared by many industrial firms. Creating industry-level forums or communities of practice would allow companies to exchange experience, develop common supplier qualification standards, and collectively raise the level of purchasing expertise across the sector.

Table 8: Summary Action Plan

Action	Objective	Expected Outcome
Level 1 : firm		
Harmonize selection & evaluation weighting	Improve initial screening accuracy	Fewer post-selection supplier failures
Implement Kraljic-based segmentation	Guide sourcing strategy by category	More rational and consistent sourcing decisions
Adopt digital SRM platform	Centralize data and automate KPI tracking	Data-driven decisions; early risk detection
Level 2: practice		
Formalize supplier site visit schedule	Strengthen relationships and detect risks	Better capability assessment; stronger partnerships
Launch domestic supplier development programme	Build local supplier capabilities	Expanded qualified local supplier base
Create cross-functional supplier review committee	Institutionalize collaborative sourcing decisions	More aligned and strategic purchasing choices
Level 3: systemic		
Advocate for local supplier base development policy	Address structural import dependency	Broader domestic supplier market sector-wide
Promote industry knowledge-sharing forums	Build collective purchasing intelligence	Sector-wide capability improvement

Source: Compiled by the author based on empirical findings and literature review

Conclusion of chapter III

This chapter presented the empirical analysis of supplier selection practices within SPA Condor Electronics, based on semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis supported by NVivo. The findings showed that supplier selection is a structured, multi-stage process guided by formal tools and clear criteria, with quality and delivery reliability identified as the most critical factors.

The results also highlighted the use of both single and multiple sourcing strategies, depending on product criticality and risk, as well as a strong focus on long-term supplier relationships supported by performance evaluation systems. At the same time, several challenges specific to the Algerian context were identified, including import restrictions, currency instability, and the limited availability of local suppliers.

By comparing these findings with the literature, the study confirmed key theoretical insights while emphasizing important contextual specificities. Based on this analysis, practical implications and an action plan were proposed to improve supplier selection practices.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This thesis examined supplier selection strategies in the Algerian industrial context, with a particular focus on SPA Condor Electronics. The main objective was to understand how supplier selection is carried out in practice, to identify the key criteria and strategies used by purchasing specialists, and to analyse the challenges that influence decision-making.

The findings suggest that supplier selection is a structured and multi-dimensional process that combines formal evaluation tools with professional judgment. Quality and delivery reliability emerge as the most important criteria, supported by other factors such as cost, technical capability, and financial stability. The results also indicate that purchasing specialists adopt flexible sourcing strategies, using both single and multiple sourcing depending on product importance, level of risk, and market conditions. In addition, supplier relationships are mainly based on long-term collaboration, with a strong emphasis on trust, communication, and continuous improvement.

The study also highlights the significant influence of the Algerian context on supplier selection practices. Constraints such as import regulations, currency instability, logistical difficulties, and the limited availability of local suppliers play a key role in shaping purchasing decisions. These factors require companies to adopt adaptive and practical strategies.

When compared with existing literature, the findings support several established theoretical principles while also showing the importance of contextual factors in shaping supplier selection practices.

However, these results should be considered in light of certain limitations. First, the study is based on a single case, which limits the ability to generalize the findings to other companies or sectors. Second, the sample is relatively small, including only five purchasing specialists with similar levels of experience, and does not include perspectives from senior management or other departments. Finally, limited access to internal data restricted the scope of the analysis, particularly regarding supplier performance, which was examined using a small sample.

Despite these limitations, this research contributes to both academic knowledge and managerial practice by providing a clearer understanding of supplier selection in a developing industrial context. It also proposes a structured action plan to improve the effectiveness and consistency of supplier selection practices. Future research could build on

this study by including multiple companies, involving a wider range of participants, and using quantitative data to strengthen the findings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide

Hello and thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

My name is Dounia Mansouri, and I am conducting a research study on supplier selection strategies in the Algerian industrial sector, with a case study at SPA Condor Electronics.

The purpose of this interview is to understand your practices and experiences regarding supplier selection within the Supply Chain Management department.

All responses will remain confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Thank you for your time.

Section 1: Profile and Purchasing Function

1. What is your role in the supplier selection process?
2. How do you define the purchasing function within your company?
3. In your opinion, is the purchasing function more operational or strategic? Why?

Section 2: Supplier Selection Process

4. Can you describe the main steps of the supplier selection process?
5. How do you identify and define your needs before selecting a supplier?

Section 3: Supplier Selection Criteria

6. What are the main criteria used to select suppliers?
7. Which criteria are the most important? Why?
8. Do you consider factors such as financial stability, technology, or reputation?
9. Do you include sustainability criteria (environmental or social)?

Section 4: Supplier Relationship Management

10. Do you prefer long-term or short-term relationships with suppliers? Why?
11. How do you evaluate and monitor supplier performance?
12. What are the key elements of a successful supplier relationship?

Section 5: Sourcing Strategies

13. Do you use single sourcing or multiple sourcing? Why?
14. Do you adapt your strategy depending on the type of product?
15. On what basis do you adapt your sourcing strategy?

Section 6: Algerian Context Challenges

16. What are the main challenges in supplier selection in Algeria?

17. How do factors such as import dependency, delays, or regulations influence your decisions?

Section 7: Improvement

18. What improvements would you suggest for the supplier selection process?

APPENDIX B : SUPPLIER SELECTION FORM

(FICHE DE SÉLECTION)

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.01/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche de sélection fournisseurs	Version: 01

Date :	25/03/2026
Fournisseur :	SUPPLIER 01
Contact :	NOM : kely ADRESSE: Sales@supplier.cn TEL:+862589586478
Gamme de Produit/Service :	WATER DISPENSER

	Critère de sélection	Sous critères	Nombre de points
01	Ancienneté sur le marché	≥5 ans 2-5 ans ≤1 an	2
02	Réputation et positionnement dans le marché (Attestation de bonne exécution....)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
03	Prix	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
04	Qualité	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
05	Rapport qualité/prix	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
06	Respect des délais de livraison	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
07	Mode de paiement	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
08	Délais de paiement	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.01/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche de sélection fournisseurs	Version: 01

09	Assistance (formation, visites périodiques,..)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
10	SAV (garantie...)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
11	Certification ISO 9001	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
12	Respect de l'environnement	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
13	Responsabilité sociétale	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
Total			35

NB : Le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 0 à 3.
La note 0 est attribuée uniquement dans le cas où le critère à évaluer n'existe pas chez le fournisseur.

Résultats et décision :
Soit X le nombre total des points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Résultat Satisfaisant : x > 28 (Fournisseur retenu)	X
• Résultat Peu satisfaisant : 14 <x≤ 28(Fournisseur retenu – sous réserves)	
• Résultat Non satisfaisant : x ≤ 14 (Fournisseur suspendu)	

Visa de l'évaluateur:

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.01/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche de sélection fournisseurs	Version: 01

Date :	25/03/2026
Fournisseur :	SUPPLIER 02
Contact :	NOM : Mohamed Messadi ADRESSE: mohamed.moh@europe.com TEL: +39 039.2025.1
Gamme de Produit/Service :	REFRIGERATOR-FREEZER

	Critère de sélection	Sous critères	Nombre de points
01	Ancienneté sur le marché	≥5 ans	2
		2-5 ans	
		≤1 an	
02	Réputation et positionnement dans le marché (Attestation de bonne exécution....)	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
03	Prix	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
04	Qualité	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
05	Rapport qualité/prix	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
06	Respect des délais de livraison	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
07	Mode de paiement	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
08	Délais de paiement	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	

09	Assistance (formation, visites périodiques,..)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
10	SAV (garantie...)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
11	Certification ISO 9001	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
12	Respect de l'environnement	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
13	Responsabilité sociétale	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
Total			28

NB : Le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 0 à 3.
La note 0 est attribuée uniquement dans le cas où le critère à évaluer n'existe pas chez le fournisseur.

Résultats et décision :
Soit X le nombre total des points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Résultat Satisfaisant : x > 28 (Fournisseur retenu)	
• Résultat Peu satisfaisant : 14 <x≤ 28(Fournisseur retenu – sous réserves)	X
• Résultat Non satisfaisant : x ≤ 14 (Fournisseur suspendu)	

Visa de l'évaluateur:

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.01/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche de sélection fournisseurs	Version: 01

Date :	25/03/2026
Fournisseur :	SUPPLIER 03
Contact :	NOM : rim ADRESSE : rim@supplier.com TEL: +86 1595552588
Gamme de Produit/Service :	ICE MAKER

	Critère de sélection	Sous critères	Nombre de points
01	Ancienneté sur le marché	≥5 ans	1
		2-5 ans	
		≤1 an	
02	Réputation et positionnement dans le marché (Attestation de bonne exécution....)	Satisfait	2
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
03	Prix	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
04	Qualité	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
05	Rapport qualité/prix	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
06	Respect des délais de livraison	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
07	Mode de paiement	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	
08	Délais de paiement	Satisfait	1
		Peu satisfait	
		Non satisfait	

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.01/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche de sélection fournisseurs	Version: 01

09	Assistance (formation, visites périodiques,..)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	1
10	SAV (garantie...)	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
11	Certification ISO 9001	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	3
12	Respect de l'environnement	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	1
13	Responsabilité sociétale	Satisfait Peu satisfait Non satisfait	2
Total			18

NB : Le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 0 à 3.
La note 0 est attribuée uniquement dans le cas où le critère à évaluer n'existe pas chez le fournisseur.

Résultats et décision :
Soit X le nombre total des points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Résultat Satisfaisant : x > 28 (Fournisseur retenu)	
• Résultat Peu satisfaisant : 14 <x≤ 28(Fournisseur retenu – sous réserves)	X
• Résultat Non satisfaisant : x ≤ 14 (Fournisseur suspendu)	

Visa de l'évaluateur:

APPENDIX C: SUPPLIER EVALUATION FORM (FICHE D'ÉVALUATION)

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.02/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche d'évaluation des Fournisseur	Version : 02

Date :	25/03/2026
Exercice :	2026
Fournisseur :	Supplier 01
Contact :	NOM : kely ADRESSE: Sales@supplier.cn TEL:+862589586478
Gamme Produits/Service :	WATER DISPENSER

N°	Critère d'évaluation	Nombre de points	Coefficient	Total
01	Prix	3	05	15
02	Qualité	3	04	12
03	Rapport qualité/prix	3	04	12
04	Assistance technique	3	03	9
05	Délais de livraison	2	04	8
06	Modalités de paiement	3	05	15
07	Engagement SST	3	04	12
08	Respect de l'environnement	2	04	8
Total			33	91

NB : le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 1 à 3.

Résultats et décisions :

Soit (x) le nombre total de points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Satisfaisants : x > 66 (Fournisseur maintenu)	X
• Peu satisfaisants : 33 < x≤66 (Fournisseur maintenu – sous réserves)	
• Non satisfaisants : x = 33 (Fournisseur suspendu)	

Visa de l'évaluateur :

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.02/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche d'évaluation des Fournisseur	Version : 02

Date :	25/03/2026
Exercice :	2026
Fournisseur :	Supplier 02
Contact :	NOM : Mohamed Messadi ADRESSE: mohamed.moh@europe.com TEL: +39 039.2025.1
Gamme Produits/Service:	REFRIGERATOR-FREEZER

N°	Critère d'évaluation	Nombre de points	Coefficient	Total
01	Prix	2	05	10
02	Qualité	2	04	08
03	Rapport qualité/prix	2	04	08
04	Assistance technique	2	03	06
05	Délais de livraison	1	04	04
06	Modalités de paiement	2	05	10
07	Engagement SST	2	04	08
08	Respect de l'environnement	2	04	08
Total			33	62

NB : le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 1 à 3.

Résultats et décisions :

Soit (x) le nombre total de points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Satisfaisants : x > 66 (Fournisseur maintenu)	
• Peu satisfaisants : 33 < x≤66 (Fournisseur maintenu – sous réserves)	X
• Non satisfaisants : x = 33 (Fournisseur suspendu)	

Visa de l'évaluateur :

Condor	BU REFRIGERATEURS ET CONGELATEURS	Code: A.02/PR.SCM 01
	Fiche d'évaluation des Fournisseur	Version : 02

Date :	06/01/2026
Exercice :	2026
Fournisseur :	**Supplier 03**
Contact :	NOM : rim ADRESSE : rim@supplier.com TEL: +86 1595552588
Gamme Produits/Service:	ICE MAKER

N°	Critère d'évaluation	Nombre de points	Coefficient	Total
01	Prix	1	05	05
02	Qualité	1	04	04
03	Rapport qualité/prix	1	04	04
04	Assistance technique	1	03	03
05	Délais de livraison	1	04	04
06	Modalités de paiement	1	05	05
07	Engagement SST	1	04	04
08	Respect de l'environnement	1	04	04
Total			33	33

NB : le nombre de points pour chaque critère est de 1 à 3.

Résultats et décisions :

Soit **(x)** le nombre total de points obtenus (cocher la case qui convient) ;

• Satisfaisants : x > 66 (Fournisseur maintenu)	
• Peu satisfaisants : 33 < x≤66 (Fournisseur maintenu – sous réserves)	
• Non satisfaisants : x = 33 (Fournisseur suspendu)	**X**

Visa de l'évaluateur :