

Supplementary File 1: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

(For the doctoral research: “Identifying the Consequences of the Proliferation of Counterfeit Sports Supplements” – Razi University)

Introduction for Participants

Dear Esteemed Expert,

We sincerely appreciate your time and consideration.

This study is part of a doctoral research project conducted at Razi University, titled:

“Identifying the Consequences of the Proliferation of Counterfeit Sports Supplements.”

Your expertise in the field of sports nutrition, public health, supplement regulation, or related domains is highly valued. We kindly invite you to participate in a semi-structured interview designed to explore the multidimensional impacts of counterfeit sports supplements. Your insights will directly contribute to generating empirically grounded, policy-relevant findings.

Confidentiality & Ethical Assurance

- All responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous.
- No personally identifiable information (e.g., name, institution, contact details) will be recorded, stored, or published.
- Data will be used exclusively for academic research purposes and analyzed in aggregate form to ensure privacy.
- Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without consequence.

Your thoughtful and detailed responses are essential to ensure the validity, depth, and reliability of this qualitative inquiry. We deeply appreciate your contribution to advancing scholarly understanding in this critical public health and sports policy domain.

Section 1: Participant Demographic Information

(For contextual analysis only — responses will remain anonymous and aggregated)

- Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

☐ Prefer not to say

- Age: _____ years
- Highest Educational Degree: _____
- Current Academic/Professional Rank: _____
- Years of Professional Experience: _____ years
- Primary Field of Expertise: _____

Section 2: Core Interview Questions

The following questions aim to elicit your expert perspective on the consequences of counterfeit sports supplement proliferation. Please respond as comprehensively as possible, drawing on your professional experience, observations, and domain knowledge.

Q1. Consumer-Level Impacts

From your expert perspective, what are the primary physiological, psychological, or behavioral consequences experienced by consumers who use counterfeit sports supplements?

Q2. Societal and Sports Community Impacts

What broader societal, institutional, or community-level consequences — such as erosion of trust, public health burdens, or ethical violations — arise from the expansion of the counterfeit sports supplement market?

Q3. Market Dynamics and Legitimate Industry Effects

How does the proliferation of counterfeit products influence the competitive landscape, consumer behavior, pricing, or regulatory pressures facing manufacturers and distributors of legitimate, standardized sports supplements?

Q4. Secondary Stakeholders and Systemic Effects

Beyond consumers and the supplement industry, which other stakeholders (e.g., regulatory agencies, healthcare systems, sports federations, insurers, law enforcement) or systems (economic, legal, educational) are adversely affected by this phenomenon? Please elaborate.

Closing Note

Thank you for your invaluable time, expertise, and contribution to this research. Your insights are instrumental in shaping evidence-based recommendations to mitigate the harms associated with counterfeit sports supplements.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the research team.

With academic gratitude,

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