

Analyzing the Social Mechanisms Regulating the Use of Dietary Supplements and Performance Enhancers Among Young Iraqi Weightlifters

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The statement “Achieving national and global recognition... compel athletes to resort to any means...” is strong and sweeping. Please consider softening the claim or supporting it with data or citations beyond Grist (2023), as this assertion may not hold universally across cultures.

The sentence “Weightlifting is among the sports typically classified within the realm of elite athletics...” is repetitive when followed by “Weightlifting, as one of the most prominent strength sports, is commonly classified among elite sports...” in the next paragraph. Consider merging or revising for clarity and conciseness.

The sentence “Weightlifters in Iraq have been identified as forerunners in the misuse of performance-enhancing substances...” requires a source or empirical evidence. If this is an observation, clarify it as such or support it with regional studies.

The manuscript asserts “the proposed model demonstrates sufficient validity” based solely on t-values. However, additional indices (e.g., RMSEA, CFI, TLI) should be reported to fully justify model fit.

There is some confusion in the values reported for AVE and Cronbach's Alpha for the “Tendency toward Substance Use” construct. Please double-check the values, as AVE is typically lower than composite reliability.

Although the Fornell-Larcker criterion is provided, the authors should also report cross-loadings or HTMT ratios to confirm discriminant validity comprehensively.

The repetition of “The effects of any specific type of performance-enhancing substance are generally...” duplicates earlier content from the introduction nearly verbatim. Please condense or rephrase to avoid redundancy.

The sentence “Athletes’ motivations to use performance-enhancing drugs are associated with maintaining and improving physical performance...” is well-supported. However, the discussion would benefit from elaborating on whether the current study confirms or diverges from this trend among Iraqi youth.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

You write, “The use of performance-enhancing substances is a complex, multidimensional issue due to its illegality...” While accurate, the phrase “illegality” may not apply uniformly to all substances across regions. Please specify the substances or legal frameworks in the Iraqi context.

The claim “Therefore, identifying the factors... can help coaches and officials plan necessary interventions” is a valid rationale, but it would be helpful to explicitly outline the expected practical implications of the findings.

The methodology states that “the questionnaire was translated into Arabic and reviewed by 10 academic experts...” Consider including more detail on the domains evaluated during validation (e.g., content, construct, or face validity).

The manuscript states, “Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to determine reliability, yielding a value of 0.84.” While adequate, it would enhance rigor to report reliability coefficients separately for each scale (e.g., self-efficacy, attitude, moral disengagement).

The phrase “proportional stratified random sampling” is used, but further explanation is needed. How were strata defined (by city, age, experience)? Clarifying this would help establish sampling validity.

The phrase “the standard deviation values indicate a moderate level of data dispersion...” is somewhat subjective. Consider specifying what constitutes “moderate” in statistical terms or comparing to expected norms.

You mention VIF and tolerance thresholds, but the interpretation lacks references. Consider citing statistical guidelines (e.g., Hair et al., 2017) for VIF cut-offs.

The statement “self-efficacy could motivate athletes to seek more information about dietary supplements...” is speculative. Consider revising to clarify whether this is based on observed data or theoretical interpretation.

The claim “Young Iraqi weightlifters with minimal concern about the ethical or health consequences...” is plausible but could be strengthened with a quote or insight from qualitative follow-up or literature specific to Iraq.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.