

## DOCTORAL THESIS

### Development and validation of instruments for assessing mindfulness and decentering in Chinese athletes

Zhang, Chunqing

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## ABSTRACT

Recently, mindfulness and decentering have been incorporated into mindfulness- and acceptance- based training programs in the sport context as two important components. Mindfulness is defined as “paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment”, while decentering refers to “stepping outside one’s immediate experience and observing oneself in the process of constructing that experiences”. The purposes of the current study were to develop and validate a sport-specific, self-report, mindfulness measurement, the Athlete Mindfulness Questionnaire (AMQ), and a sport-specific, self-report, decentering scale, the Decentering Scale for Sport (DSS). The psychometric evidence supports the clear three-factor solution of the AMQ with which to measure mindfulness and its key constituents, in the sport context, including present-moment attention, awareness and acceptance. Likewise, the psychometric evidence supports the clear single-factor solution of the DSS which measures decentering in the sport context. Content validation of the initial pool of mindfulness and decentering items, evaluated by experienced researchers and practitioners, yielded high ratings for the components of mindfulness and decentering. Good internal consistency reliability was demonstrated and strong relationships with the other constructs were found, within an independent sample of Chinese athletes for the final 16-item Chinese AMQ. In addition, good internal consistency reliability was demonstrated and strong relationships with the other constructs were found, within three independent samples of Chinese athletes for the 12-item Chinese DSS. One noteworthy finding was that, based on the psychometric evidence using two independent samples of Chinese athletes, the direct-worded items of the acceptance subscale may be more

appropriate than the reverse-worded items for use with Chinese athletes. However, an investigation into the direction of acceptance items using additional samples of athletes is recommended for future research. Implications, study limitations, and future directions are discussed.

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