Physical Activity and Exercise: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Edited by Panagiota (Nota) Klentrou

Athens Institute for Education and Research

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List of Contributors

Jeffrey R. Aird, Brock University, Canada

Bill Altermatt, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Hanover College, USA

Parvin Babaei, Physiology Department of Guilan Medical University. Iran

Srijana M. Bajracharya, Associate Professor, Ithaca College, Ithaca, USA

Shahb Bohlooli, Ardebil University of Medical Sciences, Iran

Lance G. Bryant, Assistant Professor, Arkansas State University, USA

Elizabeth S. Chong, Associate Professor, College of Health and Human Services, George Mason University

Thomas Cieslak, Brock University, Canada

Nina Ciuciuc, Departament of Environmental Health, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Kristine Noel Clark, Lecturer, North Carolina State University, USA

Christopher Tad Clark, MEd Candidate in Community Counseling, North Carolina State University

Stephen Cousins, Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of East London, UK

Daniela Curseu, Departament of Environmental Health, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Azadeh Doroodgar, Instructor, Islamic Azad university Mobarakeh branch, Isfahan, Iran

Chris Erasmus, Community College, Centurion, South Africa

Roberta Faust, Professor of Physical Education, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Andreas D. Flouris, Brock University, Canada

Ronald Gibbs Jr., Health Education Research Assistant, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Carmen Ionut, Departament of Environmental Health, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Lorena Jung, Doctoral Student

Christine Karshin, Interim Director, School of Health Promotion and Human Performance, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Khalil Khayambashi, Associate Professor, University of Isfahan, Iran

Panagiota (Nota) Klentrou, Professor and Associate Dean, Brock University Wollongong, Canada

Maria Konstantaki, Senior Lecturer in Sports Science, School of Sport, Leisure and Travel, Faculty of Design, Media and Management, Buckinghamshire New University, UK

Lydia Kret, Interim Director, Dietetics and Human Nutrition, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Emilio Landolfi, Professor, University of the Fraser Valley, Canada Howard Lasus,

Yuzhong Lin, PhD Candidate, Department of Architecture, Building and Planning, Eindhoven University of Technology, the Netherlands

Yi Lin Liu, Assistant Professor of Health and Fitness, Hanover College, USA Enos Massie, Professor of Social Work, Eastern Michigan University, USA Anna Michalakis, Health Education Research Assistant, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Andy Mooneyhan, Assistant Professor, Arkansas State University, USA James R. Morrow Jr., Regents Professor, University of North Texas, USA Bogdana Nasui, Assistant Professor, Departament of Environmental Health, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Babak Nakhostin-Roohi, Islamic Azad University, Ardebil Branch, Iran Foong-Kiew Ooi, Sports Science Unit, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia Monica Popa, Departament of Environmental Health, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Farhad Rahmani-Nia, Exercise Physiology Department of Guilan University, Iran

Ceinwen Beverley Sawyer, Senior Lecturer, Cardiff School of Sport, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, Wales, UK

Jeffrey Schulz, Professor of Health Education, Eastern Michigan University, USA

Megan C. Self, University of North Texas, USA

Harbindar Jeet Singh, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Technologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Rabindarjeet Singh, Advance Medical and Dental Institute, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Harry Theodorides, Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health Science, California State University, USA

Dorothy Thomas, School of Sport, Leisure and Travel, Faculty of Design, Media and Management, Buckinghamshire New University, UK

Harry Timmermans, Professor, Department of Architecture, Building and Planning, Eindhoven University of Technology, the Netherlands

Yoshihisa Umemura, School of Health and Sports Science, Chukyo University, Toyota, Japan

Bauke de Vries, Professor, Department of Architecture, Building and Planning, Eindhoven University of Technology, the Netherlands

Vahid Zolaktaf, Associate Professor, University of Isfahan, Iran

Chapter 1

Physical Activity and Exercise: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention: An Introduction

Panagiota (Nota) Klentrou, Brock University, Canada

Kinesiology is the multidimensional study of movement as it relates to human health and performance. It is a complex discipline that requires integrated research to study all the different biopsychosocial determinants of the relationship of health with physical activity. During the last few decades, progress has been made in regards to of the full integration of physical activity, health promotion and the management of chronic diseases across the lifespan. Sophisticated technologies and innovative interventions have added important information in the study of physical activity, fitness and exercise. In addition, healthy lifestyle behaviours establish in young ages and continue during aging in order to prevent disease associated with impaired quality of life, physical decline and mortality. Therefore, it is not one but a number of different of subspecialties that are holding the scientific evidence in Kinesiology including: exercise physiology and biochemistry, exercise psychology, physical activity measurement and evaluation, motor behaviour, sport and health administration, as well as socio-cultural determinants of health. This book includes research studies presented at the ATINER conference the last few years from a variety of these sub-specialties. This makes the selection of studies multidisciplinary and as such it moves beyond the biomedical model to focus on the multidimensionality of health, fitness and disease management incorporating disciplines spanning the 'social to cellular'. There is also a clear focus on distinct special populations with programs addressing an array of chronic diseases with an emphasis on using physical activity and exercise for human health to disease prevention and management and, more importantly, secondary social and health complications that influence overall quality of life.