

## Implementation of a gender perspective in a Swedish OT-programme

Gunilla Liedberg, Annika Lindh Falk  
*Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden*

**Introduction:** The construction of gender is an ongoing social practice. It is not trivial because in all human societies gender is associated with a gender order present at individual, organisational, and cultural levels. The borders of gender for men and women in specific cultures are negotiated at all these levels. Gender relations are influenced by circumstances such as age, social class and ethnicity. Women and men are born different, but over their life course they are shaped by culture, society and human interaction according to the gender system in their historical time and geographical place. Women and men, as a consequence of the gender order, live under different conditions, have different experiences, and use different strategies because of social, cultural, ethnic, political and *biological* circumstances. From this follows that encounters in health care are also situations where gender is constructed. In order to achieve a more equal health care it is of importance that not only research but also education of health professions as well as the organisation of health care are considering the gender perspective. In medicine exist unconscious sex prejudices influencing which care are prescribed for men/women. For instance, men are given faster and more qualified care and women have less support from employers and social insurance office in rehabilitation. In Sweden all Universities have approved to introduce gender perspective as a compulsory matter in all higher education.

**The objective:** To implement a gender perspective in an occupational therapy programme.

**Method:** By investigating literature, case studies, lectures, examinations, evaluations, and the pedagogical methods used from a gender perspective.

**Result:** An example of how to implement a gender perspective in an OT-programme by including lectures, discussions, and a conscious approach will be presented.

**Discussion:** In order to achieve a holistic and client-centred approach the gender perspective should also be regarded in OT. The encounters with our clients may then, in a more appropriate way, meet the demands and needs from the clients, and thereby increase their quality of life and health.