

GEXcel Work in Progress Report Volume XVII

Proceedings from GEXcel Themes 11–12
Visiting Scholars:
Gender Paradoxes in Changing Academic and
Scientific Organisation(s)

Edited by
Sofia Strid and Liisa Husu

Centre of Gender Excellence – GEXcel

**Towards a European Centre of Excellence in
Transnational and Transdisciplinary Studies of**

- Changing Gender Relations
- Intersectionalities
- Embodiment

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Chapter 12

Exploring Nordic Feminist Organisational Theory and Practice Through the Lens of the 'Bifocal Approach': Contributions to the Theory and Practice of Transformative Gender Interventions.

Jennifer de Vries

Introduction

This paper follows on closely from my previous paper (The Bifocal Approach': (Re)positioning Women's Programs published in Strid, Husu and Gunnarsson 2012) where I shared my enthusiasm at discovering a wealth of Nordic scholarship vitally concerned with the research and practice of transformative gender interventions in organisations. That paper introduced the 'bifocal approach' and identified some of the critical and to an extent shared issues faced by transformative gender interventions.

In this paper I explore nine Swedish interventions in depth and in comparison to the bifocal approach and the CIAR dual agenda approach developed by members of the Centre for Gender in Organisations (CGO) and popularly known through the Moving out of the Feminist Armchair special edition of *Organization* (2000 v7). All of these approaches share a common foundational scholarship – most particularly based on the 'doing gender' perspective (see Gunnarsson et al 2003: 6) based on the work, amongst others of West and Zimmerman and Joan Acker. CGO scholarship has been influential in the thinking of feminist organisation scholars and was influential in framing my own research but is largely absent as an influence within Nordic scholarship.

This is not an exhaustive review. While my introduction to Nordic scholarship began with the edited volume *Where Have All The Structure Gone?* (Finland, Norway, Sweden collaboration) and took in the scholarship of Norwegians such as Kvande (2003, 2007) and Finns such as

Korvajärvi (2003) the final sample of interventions is entirely Swedish. This is partly a reflection of my time in Sweden and the excellent work of VINNOVA the Swedish Government Innovation Agency in providing excellent publications in English (Döös and Wilhelmson 2009; Danilda and Thorslund, 2011; Lorentzi 2011; Andersson et al 2012). While most earlier formative research is only available in Swedish this is changing rapidly with growing publication in English.

My aim is to highlight the considerable strengths of this body of research in translating feminist theory into practice and to place it in a broader context, in order to further my own and other's reflections and scholarship. In doing so I hope to bring together a bibliography of texts that would provide a useful starting point for others wishing to engage with this scholarship.

It is not possible to engage with Nordic scholarship without being exposed to a great deal of discussion regarding innovation. This is partly a result of funding sources, e.g. Innovation Norway, VINNOVA (Swedish Government Agency for Innovation Systems), which seems extremely generous relative to other countries but can be problematic when it doesn't embrace transformative change (Lövkrona et al 2009). There is a lively dialogue in the literature concerning Innovation as a gendered construct, which I will not pursue here (for an overview see Chapter Five Danilda and Thorslund 2011). It is also argued that challenging norms and creating new pathways, as necessary in gender equality work, can be beneficial to innovation. In a number of the interventions reviewed here innovation and gender are paired as part of the business case for gender change interventions.

In the following section I briefly explore the categories I have used in the comparative tables.

Intervention approach and model of change

A critical issue in organisational gender change is the interplay and relationship between (individual's) agency and (organisational) structure, both in terms of how this is theoretically understood and how it is translated into the design of the intervention. Benschop and Verloo (2011: 279) highlight the difficulty of combining agency and structure, noting that '...gender equality strategies primarily target individuals or structures and only rarely transcend this dichotomy.'

At first glance the understanding of gender as performative, contextual and fluid, the work of West and Zimmerman and others might lead to a focus on agency. Acker's work on gendering processes helped to combine the individual and interpersonal doing of gender with the symbolic and structural elements, in effect the organisation doing gender.

Grappling with these theoretical influences and how to translate this into intervention approaches is evident in all of the interventions reviewed here. Most particularly Nordic scholars explored this in their edited volume *Where have all the structures gone?* (Gunnarsson et al 2003). As Kvande (2003) explains, the doing gender perspective opened up possibilities for analysing dynamics and change, but also limited their perspective, disappearing structures and power relations. Gunnarsson (2009: 2) later reflected on how this strong Nordic tradition of combining the 'doing gender' perspective with the work of Acker 'makes the everyday doing of gender visible and at the same time creates a relation to the institutional and structural level and makes social power relations visible'. This fosters a process-oriented perspective includes gendering practices and gendering processes, which as Gunnarsson observes makes it easy to combine with action and interactive research approaches. I would argue that this enables many of the interventions reviewed here to address the problematic dichotomy between agency and structure observed by Benschop and Verloo (2011).

The majority of change strategies adopted by organisations continue to focus on women as problematic, ignoring gendered structures and power relations. These liberal feminist approaches contrast with the transformative 'Frame 4 re-visioning of workplaces' approach many are familiar with from the CGO approach (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000). In my view transformative change is necessarily radical, intent on disrupting the gender power relations and structures. While Meyerson and Fletcher argue in *The Modest Manifesto* that the revolution is over and that change will only occur through an incremental creep 'small wins' approach (explored below), this does not imply that evolutionary change is not radical.

The interventions chosen here do not necessarily explicitly claim radical transformative intent, this is largely implied or understood as a result of the theoretical foundations on which they are building. 'Gender equality work founded on gender studies is going to be provocative because it means you're looking at power structures in the workplace and making visible the way a gender order is created through a number of everyday actions in the organisation' (Andersson et al 2009:75). The interventions often include a focus on individuals, however building the gender knowledge of individual men and women is very different to the liberal focus on (fixing) women. Building the gender competence and change agency of men and women, for example teaching people to understand, observe and intervene in Acker's gendering processes, creates the link between individual and organisational change. The nature of this change is potentially radical and transformative. As Andersson et al (2009: 78)

explain ‘The Action learning method distinguishes between development and learning which lead to improvement and development, and learning which lead to fundamental changeFundamental change comes out of working on looking at reality in a completely different way.’

Finally I wish to draw attention to issues of organisational access, partners and partnership building, and the sustainability of any change process. I have identified them as fundamental issues to be addressed by gender interventions that seek to disrupt the gendered status quo (de Vries 2010). I argue that they arise from the fundamental gap between the researchers’ understanding of gender and the required gender change and the organisational understanding of the ‘gender problem’ often still primarily defined as a lack of women. In examining the CGO dual agenda approach I noted a cascade effect, where the way in which the intervention was ‘sold’ to the organisation by linking it with business effectiveness became problematic in building partnerships, which in turn influenced sustainability. Rao et al (1999: 21) concluded from their overview of a number of transformative gendered change projects (including development projects and CGO projects) that the linking of goals, such as the business case or social change agenda to the gendered change agenda, was problematic. While Acker refers to this as the ‘double bind’, Rao et al refer to this pairing as a ‘fundamental dilemma’. In the case of the CGO this resulted in ‘losing gender’.

It is interesting to note therefore the strong focus on linking innovation and gender in the Nordic context. Danilda and Thorslund (2011: 14,15) describe this as the ‘innovation case for gender diversity’, in effect the ‘third wave of arguments’ for the business case, ‘focussing on gender diversity as critical for the adaptive and innovative capability of business’. This is linked to the economics case for gender equality, which stresses the wider economic benefits’ (Danilda and Thorslund 2011: 27) effectively pairing ‘equality and growth’. The aim is to shift ‘the discourse on equality from a socially worthwhile yet potentially expensive aim towards an economically productive investment...contributing to economic success’ (Danilda and Thorslund 2011: 46). I have therefore examined this pairing more fully in the tables below.

This is an exploratory piece and I should note limitations to the data. Interventions documented here were at various stages of completion, with some interventions written about repeatedly, while other publications may have been missed. Not all articles were designed to give an overview of their intervention. In some cases the focus was on research methods or tools or the role of the researcher. It is also important to note the time lag between doing the work and publishing the work. Further material concerning these interventions may be in the pipeline. There re-

main gaps where publications/reports were written in Swedish and some conference papers were not included when marked as works in progress and I was unable to find later published work. As this is an ongoing inquiry, I am keen to hear from others regarding work that has been omitted that could be usefully included.

Comparative summary of transformative interventions

Table 1. CIAR dual agenda and bifocal approach

	<p>Centre for Gender in Organisations, (Symposium Team, 2000; Coleman and Rippin, 2000; Ely and Meyerson, 2000; Meyerson and Kolb, 2000)</p> <p>global retail and manufacturing company</p> <p>Moving out of the feminist armchair</p>	<p>Bifocal approach</p> <p>(de Vries, 2010; de Vries, 2011)</p> <p>https://jennifer-devries.squarespace.com</p> <p>University and policing organisation</p> <p>Women's programs as strategic interventions</p>
Intervention approach	<p>Collaborative Interactive Action research (CIAR) approach, a partnership 'research with people' approach.</p> <p>A 'dual agenda', linking advancing gender equity with increasing organisational effectiveness. (business case). The dual agenda was considered essential to gaining and maintaining organisational access, making the work politically viable.</p>	<p>Using a pre-existing intervention, a leadership development for women program as a platform for building transformative change. Maintaining a focus on both individual and organisational development and gender change (bifocal)</p> <p>Transformative change requires an understanding of gender equality that includes a focus on men, women and the gendered organisation.</p> <p>Year long program for 30 women each year comprising workshops, one on one mentoring, peer learning (mentoring) groups and final presentation to organisation.</p> <p>Leadership model based on identity, power and organisational culture</p>
Model of Change: Theoretical model of change and how this is operationalised	<p>'Frame 4' a re-visioning of workplace cultures, designed to address deeply embedded gendered assumptions practices and processes.</p> <p>A process rather than a destination, where each organisation is unique and there is no template, or even a final imaginable destination.</p> <p>'Small wins' experimental approach to organisational change, where researchers and expert insiders together would decide on and implement small scale experiments that disrupt the gendered organisation and increase organisational effectiveness. Based on understanding that organisational change is fragmented and continuous</p>	<p>Linking individual to organisational change.</p> <p>Incremental revolutionary change</p> <p>Positioning leadership development as a lever for change.</p> <p>Development of individual's gender insight through engagement with the program, building gender change agency and relying on the small wins experimental and incremental approach to organisational change.</p>
Organisational access: How the intervention was framed/sold	<p>Organisational and individual buy in were based on the dual agenda link to improving business effectiveness.</p>	<p>The bifocal links something that fits within the current and limited ways of understanding gender equality – a focus on (the lack of) women, with something that requires a radical shift in understanding and is usually beyond the current capacity of the individual and the organisation prior to an intervention. Linking something known and safe with something unknown and risky is used to move the more radical agenda forward.</p>
Partners and partnership building: Who and how?	<p>Negotiated with CEO</p> <p>Insider partners were appointed (rather than volunteers), constantly changing through downward delegation, primarily women and not strategically placed. Insiders struggled with the change process and collaboration became difficult, with partners increasingly focussing on organisational effectiveness.</p>	<p>Engaged with men and women at all levels of the organisation. Deliberate constituency building (developing gender insight) with executive level champions of the program, senior male and female mentors and mid to junior level female participants.</p>

Sustainability of the change effort	The research process was always going to be finite. The change effort therefore needed to be owned and maintained from within the organisation, long after the researchers are gone as the change process is never complete. Researchers identified numerous tensions between the partnership building necessary for a sustainable change process and the nature of the change agenda, which culminated in 'losing gender'. The intervention ultimately did not continue and the gender focus was lost in the change efforts that did occur.	Variable. Sustainability of intervention – in one organisation 5 years, in another ongoing and in 15th year. Sustainability of individual/organisational change. Individuals engagement with gender change highly variable, but peer learning groups promising in supporting leadership development that undermined gendered leadership norms. Change continued to occur well beyond life of formal program
Transformative intervention?	Gender became 'lost', with organisational members preferring to focus on organisational effectiveness.	Despite a consistent pull towards reducing gender to women (as deficit), and to minimise focus on organisational culture/practices as problematic some success was experienced in holding on to the transformative goals of the intervention
Outcomes: individual & organisational	Outcomes became decoupled from gender	The intervention often struggled to hold onto the 'long' transformative agenda, on occasion being reduced to a training program for women. Particularly with champions and mentors there were insufficient opportunities and time to develop their gender insight. A small minority of champions and mentors exercised leadership and change agency underpinned by gender insight developed during the program. The program was more successful in its work with the women. Women participants saw and claimed themselves as leaders in new ways, thereby challenging the gendered status quo, and using the small wins approach to achieve change. Peer mentoring played a key part in this development and peer support often continued far beyond the end of the formal program
Noteworthy/interesting	The 'dual agenda' pairing proved problematic, ultimately undermining the gender change agenda. The way that the intervention was 'sold', had implications for partnership building and in turn the sustainability of the intervention.	Re-theorising women only programs as strategic interventions, translated into practice through program design and curriculum Importance of critical feminist theory on leadership, gender and the gendered organisation as framework underpinning program Focus on champions as important gatekeepers for gender initiatives
Strengths	Groundbreaking and courageous reflexive account of the difficulties in implementing transformative interventions. Became a benchmark study for others. 'Small wins' model, a joint experimental approach to organisational change that seeks to unearth gendered assumptions and workplace practices	Use of existing popularity adopted strategy to ease issues of access, partnership building and sustainability. Unproblematic access to range of organisational players, male and female at various levels/roles. Willing participation Longer term vehicle for change effort, replicated on yearly basis Peer mentoring a significant contributor to sustainability of women's leadership development and change agency

Table 2a. Swedish intervention approaches

	(Rosell 2003) Alstom Power Sweden AB 'Turbine women'		(Höök et al 2009) manufacturing company, energy company, technical university Women as power resources	(Lövkrona and Widén 2009) Lund University AKKA gender integrated leadership program*
Intervention approach	Grounded theory and interactive research. Researcher contributes theoretical knowledge, practitioners supply practice, no ready made solutions, intervention produced in collaboration.	Working with groups of women from three organisations, both separately and combined. Challenging the construction of women as inadequate in organisations through using the theoretical concept of women as a power resource (women can exercise power), with a view to challenging and changing status quo	Aiming to build a gender-conscious leadership through an in-house mixed gender leadership program with gender focus. Began as women only program, now mixed gender program for academic staff Year long program of monthly meetings with seminars, meeting observation, meeting university leaders group projects, final report.	
Model of Change: Theoretical model of change and how this is operationalised	Focus on disrupting gender creating practices in heavily male dominated industry '...look at masculine and feminine constructions as organisation practices, change becomes possible.'	Links individual change to organisational change. Situates women at the centre of defining, designing and evaluating change. 'If something represented a change to the women, the researchers would consider it as a change within the organization'.	Academic organisation and culture are problematised from a gender perspective. 'gender theories offer ways to observe, analyse and explain social and cultural phenomena to do with gender...power relationship between men and women is central'. Leadership learnt thru knowledge of organisation, knowledge of leadership and knowledge of self – each with strong critical gender lens	
Organisational access: How the intervention was framed/sold	Business case, goal to increase numbers of women managers/engineers Link to recruitment, creativity, productivity	Externally funded, 2 year project, negotiated with senior executives responsible for gender equality	Negotiated in-house	
Partners and partnership building: Who and how?	Began with interviews, managers (2M & 7F), former managers (4F) Analysis using Korvajärvi's 3 forms of everyday practices: images, self-definitions & interactions, and how they interact with each other and formal and informal structures. Next step to be workshops and appointment of group to guide work.	Reference group, 3 different participant groups, each with 10–12 senior women, selected by organisations. Two meetings first year with homework, building gender knowledge and reflection. Second year, workshop, conference joint and separate meetings (approx total 8 days) Designed to build network, connect with organisations and support women to design change initiatives	30 academics each year (aspirational leaders), apply to do program, in 3rd year of program at time of writing	

Sustainability of the change effort	Intervention unfinished at time of writing	Not clear	Continuing program, new intake each year, evolving intervention
Transformative intervention?		Maintained through researchers constant holding onto women as a power resource, despite women challenging this	Facilitated by gender focus in leadership model. Held onto despite resistance from participants, but undermined by some male participants.
Outcomes: individual & organisational		Not detailed here, referred to networks, new projects, strategic alliances, management training, recruitment improvements, implementing strategic positions, dissemination of knowledge, making project visible	Gender structures have become more visible to men and women who previously denied existence of discrimination
Noteworthy/interesting	Noted that for the company equality work is politically correct	Challenging male dominance in organisations in theory and practice required constant reflection, on part of women and researchers. Process of conveying gender knowledge is foundational, continuous and hard work	Can compare single gender with mixed gender program. Men dominated program, more competitive behaviour, contested gender knowledge and experts, and held group back from 'what can we do' discussions. Will require greater emphasis in future groups on groundrules and process to deal with this.
Strengths	Clear model of gendering processes and explication of how masculine and feminine produced in highly masculine workplace	Challenging the implicit 'deficit approach' associated with women's programs Clear focus on women as change agents and process for empowering them. Translating theoretical concept into practice Discusses what constitutes organisational change, changing men, changing themselves?	Mixed gender leadership program with a gender integrated focus Doing gender work with mixed gender leadership groups remains uncommon, with most leadership programs delivered in a gender blind fashion.

* Suitcase method http://www3.lu.se/pers/jamstalldhet/resvaskar/suitcase_method_2009.pdf [access Nov 27, 2012]

Table 2b. Swedish intervention approaches

	(Andersson et al 2009; Andersson and Amundsdotter 2012; Lorentzi 2011: Ch 3.) Fiber Optic Valley innovation system Middle Managers as Change Agents	(Amundsdotter 2010) Trade union How changes in culture can be facilitated NB Amundsdotter involved in the previous and subsequent intervention – substantial overlap in methods of working with group across the three interventions	(Gunnarsson 2009; Amundsdotter 2012) Faste laboratory (eight industrial companies and seven academic divisions at Luleå university)
Intervention approach	Action-orientated gender research, merging the doing gender perspective and learning theory within action research tradition Building gender aware 'change managers' Gender Network, 13 middle managers (male and female) from 12 member organisations, met on 13 occasions over three years, totalling 20 days. Tripartite management group of project manager, gender researcher and facilitator	Action oriented gender research Single organisation 10 meetings, 20 days in total for initial group over 18 month period 6 month knowledge phase	Combined feminist research and action research approach. Focus on joint knowledge production (co-research) through joint reflective learning, to achieve sustainable gender competence development. 3 yr project, 2–4 gender researchers
Model of Change: Theoretical model of change and how this is operationalised	Create gender aware organisations Building gender knowledge and empowerment of middle managers to create gender change within their organisation. 3 phases: uncovering the doing of gender, mobilisation strategies for change, working with change	Change agents 'expected to examine their own organisation from a gender perspective and contribute to goals and action plans for gender equal organisations' Focus on linking group's joint learning with their organisation	Creating a gender conscious organisation 'Gender competence is central for the project as well as driving forces to transform the knowledge to new sustainable practices'
Organisational access: How the intervention was framed/sold to the company	VINNOVA funding CEO's decided whether to participate. Business case, pairing gender and innovation Gender (gender-segregated labour market) as a constraint to growth and innovation.	Inside agitation from women regarding inequality. Support from the top, internal funding of in-house program, did not seek funding, unusual in Swedish context	VINNOVA funding for network project Link to innovation, specific focus on recruitment processes and the formulation of competence and skills
Partners and partnership building: Who and how?	Middle managers asked to participate by their CEO's Use of gender scholarship, including Acker as a tool for building knowledge; experiential work (using gendered group process as starting point); analysis of own workplace thru observations, interviews, surveys, focus on interactions and patterns of communication; gender coaching in workplace settings eg meetings. Senior managers offered 3 day leadership development program that incorporated gender awareness	17 union representatives (9F & 8M) Change agents towards end of project undertook observations at in-house conference and reported back in-situ to organisational members, highlighting norms of male dominance. Powerful intervention that strengthened sense of self as change agent.	'Gender equality actors' managers from member companies and Lulea University Focus on learning processes, building gender knowledge, Amundsdotter focuses on one company in her account - 13 meetings over two years, totalling 11 days Process model – making patterns visible, mobilisation processes, change processes Amundsdotter 2009

Sustainability of the change effort	Sufficient time for deep learning to occur for individuals. Change agents draw up action plans to implement in own organisation. Solo operator in all bar one organisation, lacking collegial support in workplace. Senior management sanctioned the work but majority did not prioritise it	Dissemination strategy – Researchers worked with first group, subsequent groups led by 2 women and 2 men from first group.	Intervention in progress at time of writing
Transformative intervention?	Gender focus maintained, and eventually owned/ understood in gender network. Focus on changes undertaken by change managers within own sphere that impact on organisational practices—eg organising meetings more democratically, changing gendered expectations of their staff, allocation of tasks and opportunities. Dissemination strategies within own organisation not detailed. System wide effects include networks between organisations, demand for gender knowledge, an example of social innovation in itself, improved attractiveness of Fiber Optic Valley due to positive media coverage. Five years later – establishment of a learning community to support ongoing work.	Gender was not paired with business case, clear gender focus was maintained After 3 years, based on report of 4 participants who led subsequent groups People dare to challenge prevailing culture, greater opportunity to speak, men's domination no longer accepted, equality is no longer claimed as already achieved (as it was pre intervention), everyone has had opportunity to make gender observations, greater awareness of what gender equality means, irony and ridicule has decreased, gender as an issue has changed from low to high status, leadership has become clearer about gender issues, jokes and poor attitudes are things of the past.	Processes clearly designed to maintain gender focus Seeing gender in action in and outside of work context, changes in own behaviour – as a role model, hiring women.
Noteworthy/ interesting	Target middle managers – recognise their distributive power 'We saw a change in the project when the participants realised they could act on their own authority... their actions can create differing roles for women and men.'	Uses Four Rooms of Change model to address resistance Some group work undertaken in single sex groups Change agents seen as bearers of new norms Participants struggle with unfamiliar reflective learning process	Questions commitment of companies to this kind of project in light of GFC Questions link between gender and innovation Noted that knowledge and insight does not always lead to action
Strengths	Combination of approaches to building gender knowledge and personal insight as foundation for change agency. Focus on double-loop transformative learning process and use of group to support learning. Creative use of Acker's gendering processes as tool for building gender knowledge Substantial timeframes.	Intensive experiential learning – to make gender 'visible' and therefore open to change Useful model of dissemination, participants facilitate subsequent groups. Novel intervention of 30 gender observers at conference, feeding back gender observations as gendering occurs. Brings gender into daily activity of organisation	Intervention design, and intervention processes – as noted in previous examples.

Table 2c. Swedish intervention approaches

	(Scholten et al 2012) SFIN, a food innovation industry network organisation in a Triple Helix cluster (industry, university, public bodies)	(Blomqvist and Frennberg 2012) Swedish Institute Excellence Centre FOCUS hosted by a Division of FOI Swedish Defence Research Agency	(Lundqvist and Westberg 2012) Dellner Couplers AB Manufacturing company
Intervention approach	Action-orientated gender research and development project with aim to develop a gender-sensitive innovation network Project manager male (network insider) 2 researchers, 2 consultants, all female Focus on identifying and creating infrastructure for sustainable gender equality in a network organisation	Action research Twofold objectives: 'the advancement of gender equality and the development of productivity and competitiveness of an organisation'	Interactive research One year intervention Two activities to involve whole company Survey re attractive work Mutual exchange regarding survey results and concept of doing gender
Model of Change: Theoretical model of change and how this is operationalised	Sought qualitative changes which address norms and values – working towards system-changing rather than system preserving equality processes. 'intention to give SFIN's key actors insights and tools for analysing daily activities from a gender perspective and to develop practical tools together to address gender issues in proposals from external stakeholders and when planning innovation developments Focus on SFIN as natural arena for building knowledge and planning interventions...make gender awareness 'leak' through system	'Increase gender awareness and change gender-related mindsets and actions which may restrain creativity and innovation in the organisation' Evolutionary not revolutionary, change as long-term and continuous	Gender-equality an important pre-requisite of sustainable growth Aim for a more gender mainstreamed organisation so as to retain and attract the most suitable labour for the future Gender as a positive component in building a stronger employer brand
Organisational access: How intervention was framed/sold	By invitation Funded by VINNOVA Prompted by question 'where are the women?' SFIN wanted research results on how to attract women	Funded by VINNOVA Funding applied for before researchers joined project Moved from business case towards ethical case as project developed	Triple Steelix innovation system cluster gained VINNOVA funding for research in a private company. Difficulty finding company to participate during global downturn. Employer brand became eventual door opener
Partners and partnership building: Who and how?	Struggled with who are the partners – the network organisation and/or the innovation system. Wanted to partner with SFIN and Focus Area Managers. Told to focus on system and partners and stakeholders of SFIN instead. Researchers agenda undermined by internal project manager. Steering group and CEO withdrew from collaboration. Not able to deliver knowledge building on gender and innovation	Volunteers (M & F, diverse parts of organisation and roles) selected and invited based on interest and commitment. Some with high status and power, savvy in change processes Stable group over multiple years, took ownership and responsibility Researchers emphasise education level and research background of 'co-researchers' Co-researchers trained in gender knowledge, involved in definition and implementation of project tasks Focus on organisational culture, internal processes and dissemination	Presentation to 20 middle managers All personnel invited to participate in survey and workshop, with 13 workshops, of 3 hour duration.

Sustainability of the change effort	Research completed but intervention not fully realised	Well placed co-researchers, well developed gender knowledge, and ethical rationale that suited workplace culture suggest good sustainability, however not explicitly explored	Engagement with all personnel designed to improve sustainability of change Time frames suggest deep change unlikely
Transformative intervention?	Project marginalised. Focus on absent women reduced gender equality to a women's issue	Authors claim lack of resistance to project despite transformative approach.	Focused on differences between men and women rather than doing gender eg in responding to survey material. Participants seldom raised gender issues, focussing more on aspects such as management, physical work conditions, communication between departments etc
Outcomes: individual & organisational	Completed various activities and mini projects – eg interviews (development dialogues), analysis of newsletters and homepage from gender perspective, while other initiatives that required collaboration did not occur. Action orientated research did not occur.	Evolutionary change – gender perspective integrated into policies, procedures and practices Examples given: Changes in advertising and interviewing practices Rectify under-representation of women in project management roles Input into gender equality plan	Focus on making enterprise a more attractive place to work Eg size of male and female locker rooms in proposed extension, subcontractor ordered to be aware of gender when designing webpage
Noteworthy	Defining problem as absence of women limiting changing (transformative) and SFIN's wish to fix the absence of women (body counting) – system preserving. Developed model of inward (production of gender by SFIN as a network organisation) and outward facing activities (to place gender issues on innovation system agenda) to describe approach to working in a Triple Helix network system.	Draws comparison between CGO intervention and this intervention Researchers attributed comparative success to insider-initiated project, quality/education level of co-researchers, early development of gender knowledge (avoided focus on women) time for research and change processes to unfold. Drew on fair treatment, organisational justice, a sense of fair play and solidarity as motivators for change	Problems establishing reflective dialogue and focus on gender in initial workshops, overly cautious. Revised format to be more challenging introducing pictures and anecdotes Interactive research intent and intervention design appear incompatible. Design driven by researcher and HR manager, with minimal capacity for organisational members to drive process or knowledge production
Strengths	Reflexive account of difficulties transformative GE interventions can encounter. Specifically who are the partners and the reality of what is required from partners in terms of hard work and time in action research	Challenges the inevitability of resistance in gender change interventions. Claim maintaining openness to joint inquiry on part of researchers, rather than becoming defensive is important contributor to lack of resistance	

Reflections and moving forward

The unique circumstances of social context, funding, and a critical mass of scholars sharing a theoretical approach has supported the development of 'innovative' action oriented and leadership development gender interventions. Strengths include:

- Strong theoretical grounding of the research, with focus on developing theory and practice
- The number and diversity of interventions, creating a significant pool of scholarship to draw on
- A variety of settings and designs, from in-house programs, to working across networks and clusters
- Variety of co-researchers/partners/participants, including men, at various places in organisational hierarchies
- Capacity to hold onto the gender focus. Pairing with innovation business case appears to be legitimised and sustained – partly as a result of external funding, and the gender equity discourse in Sweden
- The number, skills and tenacity of researchers, working in teams
- Focus on developing individual's gender knowledge as an essential component to the intervention and the development of tools and processes to assist this eg Acker's gendering processes used as theory, a tool and a model for change
- Empowerment of participants as change agents
- Substantial timeframes (number of workshop days and duration of intervention) and intensive groupwork often built into the design

Future research (Nordic and elsewhere!) would benefit from a more clearly articulated model of change and how the model is operationalised and translated (designed) into the intervention approach. An evident weakness in the currently available body of scholarship is the lack of attention paid to tracking and documenting outcomes, particularly organisational outcomes. Several available process tools developed in Sweden include outcomes – for example the equilibrium cycle developed by the Business Leadership Academy (Lorentzi 2011: Ch 4.) (<http://jamstall.nu/en/toolbox-2/equilibrium-cycle/>;<http://jamstall.nu/en/toolbox-2/the-ladder/>) may be helpful. There is insufficient focus on dissemination of the change effort and therefore sustainability of the change intervention. While the amount of time and intensive engagement with organisational actors is a strength in building gender knowledge, attention to developing less time intensive and costly interventions will be required to enhance take-up in other contexts and countries.

Finally, the ‘Bifocal approach’ was developed as a way of operationalising a transformative intervention specific to women’s leadership development programs. However, clearly the notion of a bifocal approach linking individual and organisational change is more broadly applicable. The key, and what keeps the intervention from falling into a liberal individual focus is the nature of the gender work with individuals. For me this is the most outstanding aspect of the Swedish contribution – the development of the gender knowledge of organisational partners, through the use of gender scholarship, tools and processes.

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