The Intersection of Professional Identity and Gender in Professional Kinesiology
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In Ontario, Kinesiology became a regulated healthcare profession in 2013 under the Kinesiology Act, 2007. Its legally required regulatory body, the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario (CKO), oversees professional Kinesiology and its scope of practice. The CKO operates to mandate what is required by and expected of a Professional Kinesiologist (PK) and, in return, enjoys full authority from the provincial government regarding the management of professional Kinesiology including the ability to define what a PK can or cannot do. As gatekeepers to the profession, the CKO plays a critical role in both overseeing and regulating who can apply to and become a PK, and how a PK and the work of a PK is represented to the public at large. The CKO wields power and authority in the Kinesiology landscape, and yet there has been no in-depth exploration to date of either the ways in which it constructs and frames Kinesiology as a profession, or how gender informs (or not) the construction and framing of professional Kinesiology. This qualitative study proposes an in-depth textual analysis of the CKO website (https://www.coko.ca/) given that its website is the most accessible (to both service providers and users) and outward-facing element of the regulatory body. Employing a critical feminist theoretical lens, I am centrally interested in: 1) how Professional Kinesiology and a Professional Kinesiologist are represented to the public at large by the CKO; and 2) if and how the representation(s) of Professional Kinesiology and a Professional Kinesiologist vis-à-vis the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario are gendered and gendering?