Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

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BA (University of Victoria, 2012)

"I Can Be There One Day": Learning and Leadership Development in a Community of Self-Identified Women in Technology

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Friday August 30, 2019
1:00 P.M.
MacLaurin Building
Room A341

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Kathy Sanford, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Bruno de Oliveira Jayme, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Darlene Clover, Department of Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies, University of Victoria

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Anastasia Mallidou, School of Nursing, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Women's underrepresentation in the technology industry is a relevant and timely issue. The increasing use of technology and its expansion into our daily lives demands greater technical literacy and skills. Despite its growth, the industry remains male-dominated; fewer than 9% of executive officers and directors in Canadian technology companies are women (Macdougall et al., 2017). Researchers have linked women's underrepresentation in technology leadership to the 'chilly climate' in technology spaces and a 'leaky pipeline' of women leaving the fields throughout their career (Prescott & Bogg, 2014b; Vitores & Gil-Juárez, 2016; Wynn & Correll, 2018). Women's leadership development can be supported by communities. This research explores how a community of practice for self-identified women in technology can support women's learning and leadership development. Using a case study within an existing community of women in technology, this study explored the women's experience in YYJ Tech Ladies. The women's stories and reflections indicated that participating and interacting in this community created safe spaces for collective learning, consciousness-raising, and supporting women's leadership. This study highlights the importance of community in facilitating women's learning and identity formation, essential factors in women's career and leadership development.