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In What Ways Could ICT Teaching And Learning Take Place At Orewa College?

Osmosis, Integration and/or Specialist Subjects?

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a:

Masters Degree

in Educational Administration

at Massey University, Albany,

New Zealand.

Lisa Marie Ballantyne

2004

DECLARATION

I, Lisa Marie Ballantyne, declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

Signed: .....
Lisa Marie Ballantyne

ABSTRACT

As a leader in ICT at Orewa College, I was continually aware of the debate amongst staff surrounding the place of ICT teaching and learning at the school. An aspect of this debate was focused on whether specialist ICT subjects should continue to exist at the school. It was from this discussion that the inspiration for this thesis arose.

Although Ministry documents (MOE, 1995b; MOE, 2002) provided guidance, what ICT teaching and learning should be occurring seemed vague. This research was a response to a need to find out the best ways for ICT teaching and learning to take place at Orewa College. The importance of this research was highlighted only a week before completion when a Draft Essence Statement for the new Technology curriculum was released (Talk2learn, 2004). This essence statement did not include ICT, and it was stated that this absence was deliberate. If the current Draft Essence statement forms the foundation of the new Technology curriculum, ICT will not be a major focus of any curriculum statement in New Zealand.

This thesis is a single site case study that investigates the ways that ICT teaching and learning could take place at Orewa College. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology has been utilised within an ethnographic paradigm and triangulation of data collection methods and groups of participants was employed to increase validity of the data. Participants included the staff, parents and students of Orewa College, local employers, representatives from tertiary institutions, contributing schools and other North Shore secondary schools. Data collection methods included document analyses, questionnaires, email interviews, partially structured face-to-face interviews and observations.

A need has emerged for a combination of some specialist ICT subjects and some integration of ICT across the curriculum, with some ICT learning taking place in a more osmosis-like discovery method. However, a greater revelation is that a new and evolving pedagogy that ICT teaching and learning needs to take place within has emerged and needs to be integrated into all subjects, including the teaching and learning that takes place within specialist ICT subjects. It is also discovered that the intended flexibility and choice in how ICT teaching and learning should take place has been limited by the current assessment framework. An ongoing partnership between schools and their communities is additionally highlighted as an important part of students' continual learning in the field of ICT.

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Thanks also to Kate Shevland, the principal, and the Board of Trustees, staff, parents and students of Orewa College. The high level of interest shown by them and by the local employers and representatives of tertiary institutions and other nearby schools has enabled this thesis to highlight a path for the future of ICT education at Orewa College.

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