

Coakley, Jerry, 2004, *A Comparative Study of Male and Female Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Leadership in primary Schools in Cork City and County, Currently and Formerly under the Stewardship of Male Religious Communities.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

One of the key characteristics of outstanding schools is outstanding leadership. The primary aim of the study is to establish the preferred model of leadership favoured by male and female teachers. To establish the preferred leadership style, the study examines four important areas of leadership to determine whether or not similarities exist between female and male respondents. The areas considered are:

- (a) the characteristics of effective leadership,
- (b) the tasks of leaders,
- (c) the interventions a leader can make, and
- (d) the importance of particular criteria in the work of a school leader.

A comprehensive review of the literature relating to leadership and leadership styles is presented, in addition to an empirical study involving the use of questionnaires and interviews. The study highlights the need for the effective leader to be skilled in the area of communications, to be supportive of staff and to possess a strong vision of what a school can be.

In relation to the tasks of a leader, female teachers regard staff development as the most important task of a leader. Male teachers, on the other hand, believe that the effective leader is the one who delegates and empowers other members of the organisation.

The most preferred intervention an effective leader can make, from a female perspective, is in supporting learning with appropriate resources. Male respondents regard the promotion of a culture of evaluation as the most important intervention. Male and female respondents regard the effective leader as having a visible presence in and around the school as the most important criteria in the work of a school leader.