

**Desmond, John A, 1997,** *'Factors affecting the Efficacy of Second Level School Entrance Examinations as a Predictor of Performance at Leaving Certificate Level'*.

### **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

There is much debate amongst parents' organisations, primary school principals and second-level school principals, in Ireland, regarding the use of second-level school Entrance Examinations. This study seeks to investigate the value of these Entrance Examinations as a predictor of future academic performance at Leaving Certificate Level. It is shown in the literature review that ordinary essay type examinations have a much higher correlation with later academic performance, than intelligence / aptitude tests. The study therefore concentrates on correlations between Entrance Examinations in English, Irish and Mathematics and later achievement in Leaving Certificate Examinations.

Entrance Examination (E.E.) results and the corresponding Leaving Certificate (L.C) results were analysed for pupils from three schools. Higher and Ordinary Level results were analysed separately. The mean and standard deviations of each set of results was calculated. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient,  $r$ , was then computed. Finally, gender mixed groups were separated into boys' and girls' results, which were examined separately to investigate if there were any gender effects.

The study found that E.E. results give a reasonable prediction for groups of students, but in most cases do not help when predicting a particular individual's results. It identified some gender effects. The correlations between E.E. and L.C. were increased when the gender mixed groups were analysed separately for girls and boys. It also found that girls outperform boys in both E.E. and L.C. at English, Irish and Mathematics.