

**Hourihane, Helen, 2014, *The Primary School Principal in the Republic of Ireland: A comparative study of the role of the administrative principal and the teaching principal with particular reference to leadership in teaching and learning.***

## **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

This research examines the role of the primary school principal in the Republic of Ireland. It is a comparative study of the role of the administrative principal and the teaching principal with particular reference to leadership in teaching and learning. The role of the principal has undergone significant change in recent years and has been the subject of considerable educational discourse. The pivotal role of the principal in supporting, nurturing and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the school is of paramount importance today. Fullan believes “when principal leadership is strong, even the most challenged schools thrive” (2006:1).

The research focuses on a study of twenty practising primary school principals: ten administrative principals and ten teaching principals, four male and six female in each sector. It examines and compares their respective roles in leading teaching, learning, at the same time, taking note of gender differentiation.

It is significant that principals in this study are focused on leading teaching and learning in their schools. In addition to providing an insight into the leadership role of the administrative and teaching principal, research findings also highlight the challenges and opportunities the role presents across both strands of principalship. It is hoped that in these challenging times for primary school principals, the findings and recommendations in this study may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of the principal in leading teaching and learning in the future.

The literature reviewed and the information cited has covered the period up to 1 August 2014.