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**O Lionaird, T, 2010, *Students' Perceptions of the Transition Year Programme in Four schools in Cork and Kerry.***

### **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

The status of the Transition Year Programme in the Irish Education system is a contentious one. It is understandable that a year which focuses on personal development, independent study skills and the learning of extra skills rather than on an academic-specific terminal examination would be the subject of debate. The opinions of teachers and parents have been reasonably well documented to date but the one grouping whose views have only occasionally been collected on a formal basis is the students. This is the intention of this research — to investigate the perceptions of students on the effectiveness of the Transition Year. This writer focuses on the areas of provision, gender and location in four schools providing the programme from the point-of-view of the students.

The research questions consider whether there are differences from the point of view of students between schools which choose to offer the programme on an optional or a compulsory basis; whether boys and girls view the programme differently and whether the location of the school has a bearing on perceptions.

The literature review outlines the history of the programme encompassing the programme's philosophy and curriculum, along with the perceptions of the various partners to date. The method of research is a student questionnaire, the findings of which are then presented and analysed.

Finally, bearing in mind the limitations implicit in a study of this scale, the study provides conclusions and recommendations aimed at improving the programmes in schools in question.