

O'Connell, Michael, 2013, *The Changing Nature of Principalship: An Investigation of Teachers' Perceptions of the Post of Principal*.

## **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

This study examines the changing nature of principalship in schools in the post primary sector in the Republic of Ireland. It investigates teachers' perceptions of the post of principal. The research was completed in three post primary schools in the Munster region of Ireland.

Chapter One sets the study in context and outlines the research questions. In Chapter Two, literature pertinent to the study is examined. The different types of second-level school that exist in Ireland are described. Various types of management structures are described as well as historical aspects of the post of principal in second-level schools. The changing culture in the management of post- primary schools in Ireland is explained. Literature pertaining to the reasons why teachers apply or do not apply for principalship is examined.

Chapter Three deals with research methodology and the study is described.

Chapter Four presents findings and analyses the findings. Sixty-five per cent of respondents indicated that they would not consider applying for principalship. A keenness to influence school culture was viewed by respondents as the most important incentive in applying for the post of principal. Excessive workload was deemed by respondents as the main disincentive in applying for the post of principal.

Chapter Five provides conclusions and makes recommendations. Initiatives need to be introduced to counter the downward trend in application for the post of principal such as the introduction of a time limited contract and an increase in the portfolio of duties for deputy principals and middle management.